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On the Fate of Blacks in the Americas

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The schism in black America

DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN

ANTHROPOLOGISTS tell of a people so indifferent to complexity that the whole of their numerical system consists of the terms "one," "two," and "many." And yet how close to our own reality they are. It is hard enough to keep two things in mind; more than that becomes immensely difficult. A while back, one of Harvard's great chemists was discoursing on what he called the "many-body problem," a condition in which the number of variables interacting with one another in any given situation makes that situation extraordinarily complicated and difficult to fathom. I asked in what range of numbers this "many-body problem" begins. A somewhat suspicious glance was returned. Did I really not know? Apparently not. "Three," he replied.

This is an aspect of our reality. It becomes significant with the onset of what James S. Coleman terms an "information-rich society." Such a society is not necessarily better able to handle itself. For people, as for rats, too much contradictory information is disorienting, and there follows the impulse to get back to simple things. Could this be the origin of *"les terribles simplificateurs"* whose dominion Burckhardt forecast a hundred years ago? Were the great Whigs of the 19th century able to live with complexity because their information was so spare? Could our movement for "social indi-

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cators," a splendidly rational enterprise, only lead to more irrationality in politics, as the numbers reveal so many contradictory tendencies?

Political society wants things simple. Political scientists know them to be complex. This is no small matter. There is hardly a limit to the price people will pay to keep things simple. One could argue that, in part, the leftist impulse is so conspicuous among the educated and well-to-do precisely because they are exposed to more information, and are accordingly forced to choose between living with the strains of complexity or lapsing into simplism.

Social science needs a strategy for dealing with this condition. The various disciplines wish to become ever more complex in order, *inter alia,* to provide "more reliable guides to public policy." But as complexities compound themselves, the public is likely to ask for ever more simplicity. Or the elites will. Yes, more probably the latter. It may be that the issue cannot be resolved in the near future, that a period of ever greater complexity will be necessary before things start falling into place and grow simple again. It may be that things will never fall into place. In the meantime, a short-run coping strategy might be for social scientists to try to win confidence by making things as simple as they can—and then to draw upon that fund of confidence by asking for a little extra effort to accept complexity without being intimidated by it. Let me see whether this can be done with the always-troubled issue of race. I shall try to answer the question: "Are things getting better or worse?"

Two models

There are, of course, simple *moral* truths about race which most Americans embrace. We assert, foremost, the equality of the races, which is to say that there can be no question of hierarchical, caste distinctions. Not all Americans, of course, assert this, but the trend of public opinion seems irreversible. Reviewing three decades of opinion survey findings, Andrew M. Greeley and Paul B. Sheatsley come firmly to this conclusion and find this process accelerating. The highest pro-integrationist scores are among the young, and among these, "Young Southerners manifest the largest net rise. . . ." Desegregation of schools, they find, has "ceased to be a significant issue." Yet few persons would assert that there are equal conditions existing between the races in America. There are not. Nor would many argue that the present disparities are acceptable. They are not. Nor would many prudent men predict an era of mounting racial peace. Deseg-

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regation is one thing; bussing another. It is an issue that could tear the 1970's apart.

Already simplicity is slipping away, and only a very few facts have been adduced, and these mostly involving popular attitudes. Is there anything simple to be said that can help a citizen or politician make sense of seeming chaos? Just possibly. Two propositions may help interpret events: *First, things are going in two directions at once. Some things are getting better, others worse. Second, considerable energy is devoted to denying either trend.*

Recall that this is an experiment, and promised only relative simplicity—of an order such that the argument may be grasped by, say, a third of the persons who will run for public office in 1972.

Begin with the fact that there has been a great folk migration from the South to the North and West. We know something about this experience. As an immigrant group settles in the city, a process of differentiation commences. Given a rough equivalence of circumstance upon arrival, a group begins to sort itself out by a process perhaps not dissimilar to natural selection. In most instances (as I would judge) there is a general upward movement, but with some individuals moving farther and faster than others. Soon the peasant or village sameness is succeeded by the social distances that separate contractor from ditch digger, landlord from tenant, state senator from straight party voter. For *some* groups, however, the urban impact can be quite disorganizing, so that within the group there are those who *decline* in their circumstances as well as those who rise. Hence, along with contractor and ditch digger there comes into being the even greater gulf that separates those members in a group who rise from those who decline: criminal lawyer and criminal, social worker and social derelict.

Let the first process be called the "everybody up" model, the second the "up-and-down" model. Both were implicit in much that Nathan Glazer and I wrote in *Beyond the Melting Pot,* a project begun in the late 1950's. It may help to think of "everybody up" as, in simplified terms, the Jewish experience, and of "up-and-down" as that of the Irish, the latter being the first large rural-to-urban migration. In the early 1960's, I had become persuaded that the black experience would be "up-and-down."[1]

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[1] Glazer and I had thought it would be "everybody up" for the Puerto Ricans, but this remains in doubt. The present plight of the Puerto Ricans tends to reinforce my later judgment that the job market and social welfare arrangements of the 1960's and beyond would greatly reward some newcomers while punishing others.

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The experience of the 1960's

When the "everybody up" model takes hold dramatically, and when the group involved has characteristics that make it readily identifiable, efforts will sometimes be made to impose a ceiling on just how far up the group may go. Jews encountered this, briefly, in "quotas" at professional schools and the like. (They may soon encounter this again, although for quite different reasons.) This ceiling has the effect of a caste limitation not unlike that which blacks encountered in the South. An obvious defensive strategy was to forbid the imposition of such ceilings. Laws were passed designed to thwart such efforts—as, for example, by forbidding deans of admission to enquire as to the religion of an applicant, or, later, to ask for a photograph. All this much overestimated the upward pressures that would be exerted by most immigrant groups. The mobility of a few groups (notably the Jews and the Japanese) has been singular, but for most it has been modest. But this initial misapprehension led to the assumption, by concerned liberals, that the great problem for blacks in the North would be that their efforts to rise would be blocked. Blacks, from their experience in the South, had reason enough to agree.

Ethnic experience argued otherwise, or such at least was my judgment. A portion of the newcomers would rise: not dramatically, perhaps, but perceptibly. The politics and culture of the Northern city would, if anything, encourage this rise. No ceiling would be imposed. This was in part hunch, based on personal experience. I had grown up poor in New York and had found this to be, if anything, rather an advantage as one commenced to show a little promise. Americans *like* poor kids coming along; they really do. (The preponderance of radical youth come from very well-to-do, even rich families. They have no way of knowing this about their country. It is, in a sense, a form of knowledge denied them, and suggests that they are entitled to a certain patience.)

Ethnic experience, however, also argued that for some groups the immigrant experience would be bi-modal. Up for some members of the group, down for others. I judged it would be "up-and-down" for the blacks, as it had been for the Irish (and some others). It seemed to me the real problem would be that of those falling through the floor, creating a 20th-century equivalent of "the dangerous classes" which so preoccupied social reformers of the 19th century.

In the early 1960's as an Assistant Secretary of Labor for Policy Planning and Research, watching the work force climb out of a sharp recession, I began to get a feeling from the figures that some

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weren't making it—that a marginal lower-working-class group was being left behind and was being transformed into a genuine lower class. I had data. I could show, for example, that, in the period roughly from 1945 to 1960, various indices of social dependency (e.g., the number of new AFDC cases) rose and fell in close relation to male unemployment rates, but that this "connection" suddenly broke up and disappeared in the late 1950's and early 1960's. I hypothesized that something had gone wrong in the situation of our urban blacks. In a policy paper prepared for the White House, I forecast sharply worsening conditions in the central cities of the North and West. At a time when the nation was preoccupied with civil rights measures—measures having to do with the issues of race and caste—I said, in effect, that the real problem was going to be that of social class.

This, of course, set the stage for much misunderstanding. I saw the issue of caste—of plain racial discrimination—as one that would be relatively easily resolved, while the problem of social class among our urban blacks would be terribly tenacious. Others, especially perhaps middle-class blacks who had no great class problems but who had in their time encountered savage caste discrimination, almost had to hold the opposite view. They believed—and some still insist—that what was happening in the ghettos was not a new sociological catastrophe but just one more instance of the pernicious effects of discrimination. There followed a curious inversion: The assertion that a situation is not racial is taken as a racialist assertion.

It is now about a decade since my policy paper and its analysis. As forecasting goes, it would seem to have held up. There has been a pronounced "up-and-down" experience among urban blacks. That is to say, the measures of social well-being then employed have moved in the two contrary directions I forecast. This has been accompanied by a psychological reaction which I did not foresee, and for which I may in part be to blame. Allow equivocation here. I did not know I would prove to be so correct. Had I known, I might have said nothing, realizing that the subject would become unbearable, and rational discussion close to impossible. I accept that in social science some things are better not said. Those who would do good must be bound, as are doctors, by the law *primum non nocere* (first do no harm). But it is too late now. The "up-and-down" process has taken hold with a vengeance—and is being denied with a fury.

The black family

I had chosen to concentrate on family structure, believing it at that time to be the best "all-purpose" indicator of social distress. From this

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indicator, one could forecast that the number of dependent urban families would grow and with it, in Kenneth B. Clark's phrase—we were then reaching convergent judgments, and we shared information—a "tangle of pathology." This forecast, to repeat, was correct. The data are not to be challenged (although they can be differently interpreted). The connection between unemployment and dependency does indeed appear to have disappeared in the 1960's. Full and overfull employment (as a macroeconomic condition) was accompanied by full and overfull welfare rolls; and the process continues. New York City is now budgeting to have one person in six on welfare in its coming fiscal year.

Poverty is now inextricably associated with family structure. During the 1960's the number of children living in poverty declined sharply—*except for those in female-headed families; and this was true for white families as well as black.* (Were it not, a much more complicated hypothesis than mine would be required.) But this trend was most pronounced among blacks and other "new arrivals" in the city, as is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1. *Number (in thousands) of Related[1] Children Under 18 in* White *Low-Income Families*

YEAR	FEMALE HEAD	ALL OTHERS
1959	2,420	8,966
1966	2,112	5,092
1967	1,930	4,799
1968	2,075	4,298
1969	2,093	3,684
1970	2,274	3,934

[1] Legally related to the head of the family

TABLE 2. *Number (in thousands) of Related[1] Children Under 18 in* Negro *Low-Income Families*

YEAR	FEMALE HEAD	ALL OTHERS
1966	2,017	2,667
1967	2,265	2,293
1968	2,241	1,947
1969	2,239	1,640
1970	2,490	1,612

[1] Legally related to the head of the family

As can be seen, the total number of poor white children drops sharply, rising only a small bit in the recent recession. But the number of poor white children in female-headed families, after declining also, begins to rise in 1967. At the outset of the 1970's it is almost as

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high as it was at the end of the 1950's. The black experience was similar, but more pronounced. In gross terms, the number of blacks below the poverty line declined 49.4 per cent between 1959 and 1968 for families with male heads; but it increased 23.6 per cent for those with female heads. Data for black children show an even more dramatic pattern in recent years. By 1968, the majority of poor black children were in female-headed families, and the proportion recently reached three fifths.

As would be indicated, the number of female-headed households has also increased. It is now large for both races. In 1971, in the central cities of metropolitan areas, it was 27.6 per cent for whites and 39.3 per cent for blacks. The *highest* proportion for any group of "recent arrivals" is not that of blacks, but of Puerto Ricans, an outcome at least consistent with the hypothesis that in the post-War period something went wrong with the incentive structures and economic opportunities of Northern urban areas. How else, for example, can one explain the great disparity—visible in Table 3—between the proportion of female-headed families among Mexican-Americans and that among Puerto Ricans?

TABLE 3. *Per cent of Families with Female Head by Ethnic Origin: March 1971*[1]

WHITE	NEGRO	MEXICAN	PUERTO RICAN
9.4	30.6	12.0	33.9

[1] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Population Characteristics, "Selected Characteristics of Persons and Families of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Other Spanish Origin: March 1971," Series P-20, No. 224, October 1971.

Events on the upside

Events on the upside were, if anything, more dramatic. Simply put, during the 1960's young black husband-wife families (families with or without children in which both spouses are living together) began to approach—and in a number of important categories to reach—income parity with whites. Everywhere these younger blacks are closing the gaps. This is hardest to do in the South, where gaps were and are wider than elsewhere; but outside the South it is practically a *fait accompli*. Thus, in the noncommittal prose of the Bureau of the Census: *"There was no apparent difference in 1970 between the incomes of white and Negro husband-wife families outside the South where the head was under 35 years old."*[2]

[2] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Special Studies, "Differences Between Income of White and Negro Families by Work Experience of Wife and Region: 1970, 1969, and 1959," Series P-23, No. 39, December 1971.

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Now this surely is an event: young couples from an oppressed minority starting their lives as full equals, in income terms at least, of their contemporaries in the "majority" group. Not only they, but their children.

This is not the end of it. In young families outside the South, *where both husband and wife worked,* black incomes are *higher* than white. For those with heads under 35, black earnings were 104 per cent of white. For those with heads under 25, black earnings were 113 per cent of white! It would thus be reasonable to state that these young black couples, starting their lives together, beginning to send their children to school, beginning to look for a house perhaps, have the highest median family incomes ever recorded in the history of the world ($9,777 as against $8,678 for whites). Surely this says something about the recent past, and hopefully also about the future.

Qualifications are, as usual, necessary. Black wives work more often than white, and contribute a larger proportion of family income. But the difference is not great. In 1970, in the North and West, the proportion of young (under 35) husband-wife families with both spouses working was 54.1 per cent for whites and 62.7 per cent for blacks. For both groups the proportion of working wives grew considerably during the decade. (It is highest, for both, in the South.) Further, as Table 4 indicates, *for the youngest category of husband-wife families a higher proportion of white wives is working than black—and still there is overall income equality between the two groups:*

TABLE 4. *Husband-Wife Families in the North and West by Overall Income and Proportion of Wives Working. Head Under 25 Years. 1970.*

	WHITE	NEGRO
Income	$7,910	$7,540
Per cent of wives working	69.6	61.0

The ratio of black to white income, 95.6 per cent, passes for equality in Census usage. Thus, even though *more* white wives were working, there is a rough equality between the incomes of young black and white couples. (A possible explanation for this is that young Negro wives in the North and West—in families with a head under 35—earned approximately 30 per cent *more* than their white counterparts, $3,900 as against $3,010 in 1970. It should also be noted that, outside the South, the black population is more urban than is the white, and would therefore tend to have higher earnings.)

Again, qualifications must be made. The young (under 35) hus-

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band-wife Negro family in the North and West in which *only* the male worked had earnings in 1970 only 76 per cent of its white counterpart's. And one must remember: Half the black population still lives in the South, where the black income disadvantage is most pronounced. This is clear from Table 5.

TABLE 5. *Comparison of Median Family Incomes—North and West vs. South. 1970.*

	AGE OF HEAD			
	UNDER 35	35-44	45-54	55-64
WHITE				
Only husband worked				
North and West	$ 9,373	$11,215	$10,135	$ 9,524
South	8,210	9,787	9,738	8,169
Husband and wife worked				
North and West	$10,578	$13,651	$15,218	$14,027
South	9,948	12,139	13,292	11,467
NEGRO				
Only husband worked				
North and West	$ 7,104	$ 7,637	$ 8,269	(B)[1]
South	5,196	(B)[1]	(B)[1]	(B)[1]
Husband and wife worked				
North and West	$11,045	$12,317	$13,077	$11,384
South	7,464	8,993	8,196	7,385

[1] (B)—Base less than 75,000.

This said, it remains the case that the trend lines are consistent and powerful. If they persist, that is to say, if the present income equality of these young black/white families holds up as they grow older, one of the fundamental correlates of race in the United States—inferior earning power—will disappear.

Education and "the deepening schism"

This improvement did not "just" happen *to* blacks. It was made to happen *by* black persons working hard for things they want. It reflects also a changing reward structure. Andrew F. Brimmer, who has no peer in this area of analysis, has shown that in the 1960's the economic rewards of higher education among blacks sharply increased, but that there was little improvement for persons with less schooling. Between 1967 and 1968, the median income of Negro families headed by a person with *any* college experience rose from $8,686 to $10,704, or $2,018. In the same period, income for comparable whites rose from $11,548 to $12,356, or $808. Brimmer writes:

Within this very short time horizon (one year) the median income of a

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> Negro family headed by an individual with some college increased by 23.2 per cent, compared to a rate of growth of only 7.0 per cent for a white family headed by someone with some college education.

By contrast, he continues, the growth in income for Negro families headed by someone with only an elementary or high school education was not significantly different: For those with some high school the Negro increase was 12.1 per cent; the white, 8.0 per cent. For those with only eight years of education, the gap actually widened, with whites gaining 6.6 per cent and Negroes only 3.0. Brimmer perceives a general pattern:

> In 1967 median family income for Negroes with a head who had four or more years of college was 55.8 per cent higher than for a family headed by someone with only four years of high school. One year later this gap had widened to 74.0 per cent. For white families the income increment for families with a head who had four years or more of college was 42.4 per cent above those with a high school diploma in 1967, and in 1968 this gap actually narrowed slightly to 40.4 per cent. . . . The income position of Negro families headed by someone with a college degree is moving substantially closer to white families with college degrees—and progressively further away from Negro families headed by someone with only elementary or high school education.

This variance is striking in young families. In 1968 the Negro family headed by a 25-34-year-old person with one to three years of college had a median income 111.1 per cent higher than one headed by a person with only one to three years of high school. For white families, this gap was only 29.6 per cent.

In the period roughly 1964-1965, when I became persuaded that this "up-and-down" development had commenced, and would grow more pronounced, my writing concentrated upon those in trouble, the female-headed families. But the "upside" was also evident, although no one, at least not I, foresaw that it would take off nearly so dramatically as it did (as for example in black college enrollment, which increased 85 per cent between 1964 and 1968). Brimmer was then an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, plying his trade of economist, and was not, as I recall, deep into this subject as yet. Since then, having become a Governor of the Federal Reserve System, he has made it his business to keep after the data, and has become most emphatic about what, in a 1970 speech at the Tuskegee Institute on "Economic Progress of Negroes in the United States," he termed "The Deepening Schism."

> During the 1960's, Negroes as a group *did* make significant economic progress. This can be seen in terms of higher employment and occupa-

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tional upgrading as well as in lower unemployment and a narrowing of the income gap between Negroes and whites.

However, beneath these overall improvements, another—and disturbing—trend is also evident: Within the Negro community, there appears to be a deepening schism between the able and the less able, between the well-prepared and those with few skills.

This deepening schism can be traced in a number of ways, including the substantial rise in the proportion of Negroes employed in professional and technical jobs—while the proportion in low-skilled occupations also edges upward; in the sizable decline in unemployment—while the share of Negroes among the long-term unemployed rises; in the persistence of inequality in income distribution within the black community—while a trend toward greater equality is evident among white families; above all in the dramatic deterioration in the position of Negro families headed by females.

In my judgment, this deepening schism within the black community should interest us as much as the real progress that has been made by Negroes as a group.

More recently, Michael J. Flax of The Urban Institute, using nonwhite rates of change on various social indicators for the period 1960-1968, calculated the "Approximate Year Nonwhite Levels Might Reach 1968 White Levels." His figures suggest that, in the course of the 1970's, blacks will reach the 1968 white level in a whole range of categories: per cent completing high school, per cent in clerical occupations, per cent with incomes over $8,000 (1968 dollars), median family income, per cent in professional and technical occupations, and even fertility rate.

At the bottom of Flax's scale, however, are three indices of family structure: per cent illegitimate births, per cent female-headed families, and per cent children living with two parents. Here no date for "catching up" with 1968 white America is given. The chart reads, "Probably Never."

Denying the facts

This "up-and-down" pattern would seem by now to be sufficiently pronounced to have impressed itself on persons concerned with reporting, or analyzing, or shaping public policy. It has not. This is a difficult statement to prove, but the reader of *The Public Interest* might ask himself or herself whether reading the facts so far presented does not come as something of a surprise. Professors among them might inquire as to how many students are aware of these trends, or would believe them when confronted by evidence. This brings us

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to the second of the propositions asserted earlier: that a considerable energy is devoted to denying either trend.

As I have little more than opinion—albeit a painfully informed opinion—to offer by way of explanation of this phenomenon, the reader will be best served by a fairly brief presentation of probable-to-possible explanations. To begin with, these "up-and-down" events have occurred in a period of mounting radical criticism of American society. This radical impulse derived, for the most part, from concerns only marginally related to poverty and race. But once a general movement to the left was underway, these issues were seized upon for understandable strategic reasons. Against relatively little resistance, radical ideologists have been insisting that almost everything is getting worse, and denying that anything is getting better. This insistence has made more of an impression on whites than on blacks. In their recent study, *Hopes and Fears of the American People,* Albert H. Cantril and Charles W. Roll, Jr. report that nonwhites, in sharp contrast to whites, see the nation as having progressed in recent years. Whites see only regression. Some of these whites are traditionalists, no doubt; but there is abundant and vocal evidence that large portions of the affluent, educated classes, for whom the nation has become something of an abomination, are to be found among them too.[3]

Denial can take the form of lying, which is common, or disputing facts, also common. (At a very good university—it must be *very* good for this test to succeed—one can come upon students who "know" that the Census rigs the data to please The Establishment.) Just as viable is the technique of redefinition. Not just among radicals, but in a more general way among affluent youth, there has developed an insistence that things previously called success are *not* success. Acquiring one wife, three kids, two cars, and a house in the suburbs can, if one wishes, be defined as disaster. The media are sensitized to this view, and hence have made much less of black success, in these "straight" terms, than they might otherwise have done.

Further, it has proved impossible to establish a reasoned discussion on family structure as a social problem. This, like the radical

[3] Observe, for example, the present rewriting of the political history of the "war on poverty," of the Kennedy-Johnson Administration in the early 1960's. That such an effort was launched is difficult to deny, but the explanation is now almost everywhere to be encountered that it was launched out of fear of an insurrectionary proletariat. Men of government *who were there*—James L. Sundquist, John C. Donovan, Adam Yarmolinsky—have written careful accounts that show nothing of the sort happened, but to little apparent consequence.

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resurgence, is rather a phenomenon of the 1960's. A brief chronology may help explain. In March 1965, I finished a report for President Johnson that began, "The United States is approaching a new crisis in race relations." As remarked earlier, I felt the struggle to overcome caste discrimination in the South was all but won, but that *a new crisis of social class in the North* was coming, and that few were prepared even to understand this, much less to respond in advance with social measures that might head it off. In June, the President made this the theme of his address at Howard University. The reception was most cordial.

But two months later, hours after the Voting Rights Act was signed, the riot broke out in Watts. Victims became aggressors. Washington was startled and uncomprehending. In the midst of the crisis, the White House made public my report. Suddenly the subject of family structure came to be associated with this painful new circumstance, which is to say, riotous and self-destructive behavior on the part of a group previously (and accurately) depicted as singularly victimized. With the onset of rioting, black spokesmen were in a defensive position in America, no matter how much whites were blamed for having made it possible or inevitable. These spokesmen found it impossible to face up to what was really happening in the ghettos. Nevertheless, when the rioting subsided, the reality of self-victimization in the slums began to emerge. Central to this was the exploitation and suffering implicit in the ever-growing number of dependent families. To a community desperately declaring its unity and coherence, this was painful evidence of just the opposite. Hence the more evident it became, the less possible it was to discuss it: Black leaders took every such effort at discussion as a white, racist attempt at self-exculpation, an evasion of responsibility for the black condition. Some spokesmen went further. A literature of denial steadily accumulated on the general theme that there was nothing wrong with these family arrangements, that what was wrong was a sick society which could not see it as a "natural" and healthy adaptation. I personally came in for a good deal of abuse, although I would say that this did not become hysterical until the welfare rolls in New York City passed the one million mark.[4]

[4] I cannot expect the reader to be as interested in this subject as I have been—and even my interest has strayed in recent years—but the continued and even growing number of books and articles taking off from this event seems most unusual. Not all this writing is hostile, and some has certainly helped my understanding. Thus Ronald Berman, in his study, *America in the Sixties: An Intellectual History*, writes:

If the great event of the Fifties was the [Brown v. Bd. of Education] decision

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A failure of enquiry

The central assertion of my critics was that responsibility for the situation lay with those who pointed it out. This is common enough in human experience, and as such no cause for alarm. But there was also an edge to some of the attacks that takes one back to Hannah Arendt's depiction of the totalitarian elites of the 1930's in Europe, who maintained their positions through an ability to turn every statement of fact into a question of motive. It would not be so bad were it not that so much of the literature of denial has assumed scholarly garb. One man launched an academic career with a small volume revealing in triumphant tones that, as incomes rose, black/white family structure converged. The elementary question that would be put to a sophomore—which was the dependent variable, income or family structure?—was not put to this man; he had come forward with an ideologically correct proposition. Yet the welfare rolls continued to swell. This, it was then explained, was a good thing: The new recipients had been eligible all along, but were only just coming into their rights, and welfare money would help solve their problems. That the three final social indicators listed by Flax continued to deteriorate, was ignored, or even denied.

There really has been a failure of enquiry. Several years ago I had about completed a vast book on the subject, but decided not to publish it. All I had achieved was a description of the problem. Others have done this, and have done it better than I could. But

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of the Supreme Court, the great event of the Sixties was, I think, the publication of the Moynihan Report. . . . The former defined the external, political limits of the problem—the latter defined its inherent character. The Report qualified the idea of progress and implicitly criticized the ideology surrounding civil rights. The sociology of civil rights, unlike its politics, argues that the realities of change are not solely matters of law; it argues that the limiting factors of change are not solely those of the white community. *The Negro Family,* with its description of social pathology, was particularly demoralizing to those who gave their faith to political action. Yet it did not initiate a new sense of the Negro condition. It was only a sad but intelligent summation.

Five years ago, I should have vigorously resisted this assessment, arguing that the Report simply called for a new direction in politics, basically one toward income redistribution. I am older, wiser, even sadder, and am no longer sure. In the fall of 1965, I published a summation of my research as the lead article in an issue of *Daedalus* devoted to "The Negro American." The President of the United States wrote an introduction to this volume. Everyone was most pleased, not least with my contribution entitled "Employment, Income, and the Ordeal of the Negro Family." I had concluded with the assertion that there was not a minute to lose, that a crisis of commitment was upon us, but clearly, I felt, we would do what had to be done. Instead, all concerned, or almost all, have since turned and attacked not the problem but the definition of it. Recently, one of the contributors to the original *Daedalus* volume, again writing in *Daedalus,* reported that there was much resentment from the moment President Johnson raised the issue of the black family at Howard University. But certainly no one gave voice to this at the time. I cannot but believe that the riots made the difference.

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causality eludes us. *Why* is this tragedy happening? Some attention is being paid the curious differential in sex ratios between American races. (For every 100 females born in 1968, there were, respectively, 105.6 Caucasian males, but only 102.6 Negro males. Oriental ratios are frequently higher than Caucasian.) This pattern has existed and has been known for some decades now. It surely has some consequences, but it is hard to see how it can explain the recent emergence of such large numbers of female-headed families. Similarly, the notion that there is an obvious historical explanation for the phenomenon—a position first advanced, I believe, by W. E. B. duBois in *The Negro American Family* in 1908 (although Tocqueville put forth much the same view in a report prepared for the French Senate in 1839)—is being shaken by historians. The present situation seems to be of relatively recent origin. I persist in the belief that its explanation will be found in changing relationships between employment and income, and especially in the presence of welfare income as an alternative to earnings. But, to my knowledge, little serious analysis of this question is going forward.

I take this to be a form of indifference to pain. Those children are there, and their misery is not going to be reduced by well-paid ideologues explaining that they are the product of liberated sexual mores, freed of bourgeois hypocrisy. Still, I see no prospect that this pattern of denial will change—*unless* the situation begins to improve, and the question may be posed in terms of helping it to improve even faster. A cursory look at the demographic profile suggests that this can come in the early 1980's, after having leveled off in the mid-1970's. Possibly sooner. Since none of us who write about the subject feel any of the pain, I imagine we shall summon the reserves of character required to wait.

Feeding the horse to nourish the sparrow

In the meantime, it has apparently become necessary to deny that the condition of other blacks has improved in any respect. There is no mystery to this. There are few more valuable assets a group can possess in modern America than a belief by the larger society that it has been the victim of injustice. Blacks, who have been subjected to incredible injustice, have every reason to want to keep up the pressure on whites, and to be intensely suspicious of anything that might lead to a lessening sense of obligation—particularly if this, in turn, should lead to dismantling the enormous service programs (and their derivative organizations) which government has created to deal

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with problems of the poor. Recently, Senator Abraham Ribicoff, a former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, estimated that there are some 168 antipoverty programs sponsored by the federal government at an annual cost of $31 billion. If one third of this amount, he notes, was given directly to the poor, there would no longer *be* any poverty in the United States (except, of course, that the poverty level would immediately be re-estimated up). The Senator is right, but his very data suggest why little will come of his being right. Thirty-one billion dollars is a lot of money. Some of it goes to the poor, but a great deal also goes to the middle class, including those the programs have made middle-class. There is no direct data, but it would seem reasonable to interpret the sharp rise in the income of educated blacks during the 1960's as, *in part,* the result of the success of this group in asserting *its* right to the jobs that go with providing services to the black poor. Blacks had every reason to do this. But there now exists a tremendous *social and class interest* in maintaining these subsidies. It is not an interest of the poor but of those who minister to them. The social science of the 1960's has pretty much demolished the notion that much comes of "enriched" service programs, excepting the enrichment of the service-dispensing classes. These programs are more or less ingenious instances of that old technique: feed the horses in order to nourish the sparrows that are in the vicinity. The horses have always found this plausible.

It is not astonishing then that there was genuine fury—the fury of an important interest suddenly threatened—in a number of service organizations when the news of progress in reducing black/white income inequality began to be made known. Again, I seem to have been responsible. I first made the point in the spring of 1970, after having got the Census to break out the income figures for families in the North and West with heads under 25. It turned out that in 1968 this figure for blacks was practically level with the white figures. This seemed good news: a credit to the young black people and, for a change, no disgrace to the country. It also seemed to me to buttress the case for establishing a guaranteed income for families on the other end of the income distribution. But the revelation was not welcomed. It was resented, and the by-now familiar attacks began. When, last December, the Census published the newest data, including information on working wives, it was made—by various journalists and scholars—to seem a refutation of the earlier assertion. Where there was income equality it was only because wives worked! But this is not at all what the data say. Where *young* wives work, outside the South, there is most likely to be income inequality—in favor of blacks!

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Among my under 25's, fewer black wives than white wives were working in 1970—but still there was income equality. Good news? Not on your life. The media, having largely ignored the progress toward equality, now reported the new data in terms of the dispute over what equality meant.

Second-order effects

It does not seem to me that any of these strategies give cause for concern in their first-order effects. Of course blacks should keep up the pressure. Of course they should try to get jobs being handed out to deal with black problems. But there are two possible second-order effects which need to be looked at. The first has to do with the condition of the poor. It is not good. Recently, a black professional was named Correction Commissioner of New York City, the first of his race in that position, which pays $37,500. At the time of his appointment he estimated, according to the *Times*, "that between 90 per cent and 95 per cent of the city's prisoners were black or Puerto Rican." The Commissioner seems a fine man, and it is altogether reasonable, given that prison population, to *expect* that there should be a black commissioner. (Typically, he replaced an Irishman, the end of a line that more or less commenced when the city's jails were disproportionately filled with Irish.) But satisfaction at this event could easily conceal the *pain* implicit in a criminal class so disproportionately drawn from two groups, and in consequence disproportionately preying on those two groups. Pain for the victim; pain for the criminal; a pathology that must be untangled, and not simply used to improve the condition of others. I say this with some force, after almost three years of watching the poverty professionals of every race, color, and creed all but systematically attempting to block the effort by the federal government to establish a guaranteed income for the poor. Power to some people corrupts.

The other of the second-order effects which come of denying improvement where it has occurred has to do with national morale. Social change is not easily achieved. When it successfully occurs, we ought to know about it, and permit it to cheer us up. There is little danger that we will grow complacent. Nothing I have written in this article provides *any* grounds for complacency. Lower-class behavior in our cities is shaking them apart. Upper-class lying—that the men in jail are political prisoners, that the fatherless child is happier, that the welfare system is a conspiracy to keep the proletariat passive—is destroying standards of discourse. The language of politics grows

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more corrupt. We have graduated a demi-generation of students who appear lost to reality. We are beginning to encounter middle-of-the-road politicians who will seemingly say anything. We approach a fantasized condition. All the more, then, is the need for the public to get a good hold on reassuring events when they do occur. This is especially so when the events can reasonably be interpreted as, in part, the successful outcome of public policies—which I believe is the case with the rising incomes of educated young blacks.

Envoi

To illustrate, and be done with the proposition that in our present state good news is bad news for the generality of those who interpret social data in this field, let me touch on the subject of medical disqualification rates for military service. I first came upon this subject in the summer of 1963. Kennedy's legislative program was dead in the water. Almost the only bill of consequence to have passed the Congress was an extension of the draft, which the Senate had debated for 10 minutes. On June 30, or thereabouts, the director of Selective Service submitted his annual report to the President and Congress, noting that once again about half the draftees called for preinduction examination were found mentally or medically disqualified, or both. This news rated two inches in the Washington *Post*, the point being it was not news but rather the routine, recurrent finding. It struck me, however. If half the nation's youth were not qualified for military service, was this not an argument for the President's Youth Employment Act, the biggest of the Labor Department's bills that year, and one high in the President's priorities? (It eventually became Title I of the Economic Opportunity Act.) Was it not also the case that Selective Service might be used as a screen to identify young people entering the work force with educational or medical deficiencies? I proposed an enquiry. The President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation (!) was duly established. Much came of this. Our report, *One Third of A Nation*, was finished by January. It was in many ways the first profile of poverty the federal government had yet developed. The linkage between failure on the mental test (the Armed Forces Qualification Test, or AFQT) with common indices of poverty—region, race, family size, and such—was striking. It was about the best data available to the planners just then beginning work on the poverty program. It launched Project 100,000 in the Defense Department. It even spurred James S. Coleman, in designing his epic *Survey of Equal Educational Opportunity*, to ask questions

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about family background from which emerged the central finding of his study of educational achievement.

One aspect of the Selective Service data and the report, however, was ignored at the time and has been since. *It appeared that poor persons—persons with less education, non-whites, Southerners—were healthier than others!* Consistently, such persons had quite the lowest medical disqualification rates. I inquired about this around HEW and the Pentagon, but no one seemed to know anything—or, rather, everyone knew it could not be so. Only once thereafter am I aware of any notice being taken of it. A delegation of Black Muslims called on me in Cambridge to see if I knew anything more about these extraordinary statistics. *They* believed them.

On returning to Washington in 1969, I probed a bit further and learned that the military, in the slow but fine grinding way of bureaucracy, had been pursuing the matter. A difficulty with Selective Service data is that they not only exclude obviously disqualified persons, who are not sent forward by their draft boards, but also leave out an even larger proportion of persons who volunteer or go into the reserves or officers training, so that draft disqualification rates are higher than "true" rates. (The Director's one half became the Task Force's *One Third.)* The military had now aggregated a more representative pool, including enlistment examinations, which—while still not fully representative of the population—was quite good enough for the purpose of comparing disqualification rates by race and education level. In 1970, a summary of *preliminary* findings was prepared for me, which may as well be quoted verbatim:

1. *Whites have a higher medical disqualification rate than Negroes.* In 1969, 33 per cent of the white examinees were found physically unfit for military service during preinduction examinations, compared to 24 per cent of the Negroes. As shown in Table A, this white-Negro difference has persisted for many years.

TABLE A. *Per Cent Disqualified for Medical Reasons at Preinduction Examinations—Initial Examinations Only*

	WHITE	NEGRO
July 1950–December 1965	22	13
1966	25	16
1967	28	19
1968	30	20
1969	33	24

2. *Better educated men have higher medical disqualification rates than those with lesser education.* The data show that within each

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race, better educated men fail the medical examination more frequently than poorly educated men. However, we still find that at each educational level, the white medical disqualification rate is higher than for Negroes with the same education.

For the total population, the medical disqualification rate is 28 per cent compared to 19 per cent for Negroes. When we standardize for education (by assuming that white and Negro examinees have the same educational level), the Negro disqualification rate rises to 22 per cent. This indicates that the higher educational level of white examinees accounts for about one third of the white-Negro difference in medical disqualification rates.

TABLE B. *Per Cent Disqualified for Medical Reasons by Educational Level—Preinduction, Induction, and Enlistment Exams. Aug.-Sept. 1969*

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	PER CENT DISQUALIFIED	
	WHITE	NEGRO
Elementary School	24	17
Some High School	23	18
High School Graduate	25	18
Some College	31	26
College Graduate	38	31
Total—All Educational Levels	28	19
Total—Standardized by Education	28	22

3. *Men who score high on the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) have a greater medical disqualification rate than those who receive low scores on the mental test.* For each race, men with better test scores tend to fail the medical examination more frequently. Still, at each mental group, whites have a higher medical failure rate. When we standardize for mental test score, medical disqualification rates for whites and Negroes become closer. Scores on the AFQT account for about 45 per cent of the racial difference in medical disqualification rates.

TABLE C. *Per Cent Disqualified for Medical Reasons by Mental Group—Preinduction, Induction, and Enlistment Exams. Aug.-Sept. 1969*

AFQT MENTAL GROUP AND PERCENTILE SCORE	PER CENT DISQUALIFIED	
	WHITE	NEGRO
I (100-93)	29	27
II (92-65)	29	27
III (64-31)	28	22
IV (30-10)	26	18
V (9-0)	26	17
Total—All Mental Groups	28	19
Total—Standardized by Mental Score	28	23

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The Pentagon analysts were careful. They assumed that better-educated persons were less willing to enter the armed services, had more extensive medical histories, knew them better, and so found it easier to get themselves disqualified. It is easy to think of further possibilities (e.g., better educated men might be older and thus more likely to be past their physical peak). In various ways the Vietnam war has surely distorted the data. Obviously, as the war grew bigger, the youth of America got "sicker" and medical disqualification rates rose. And yet—and yet the ratios persist through peace and war, high draft calls and low. In 1959, 134,601 persons were examined, and 24 per cent of whites and 14 per cent of blacks were medically disqualified. In 1966, 1,455,020 persons were examined, and 25 per cent of whites and 16 per cent of blacks were medically disqualified. One asked about medical disqualification rates for persons who apply for enlistment. A table was prepared based on initial examinations of applicants for enlistment, men who did not receive a prior "preinduction examination." Disparities diminished, but persisted.

TABLE D. *Per Cent Disqualified for Medical Reasons by Educational Level. Applicants for Enlistment—Initial Examinations. Aug.-Sept. 1969*

EDUCATION LEVEL	WHITE	NEGRO
Elementary School	12	8
College Graduate	13	12

What about medical separations from service "For Prior Existing Defects"—that is to say, men drafted or enlisted who are thereafter found to have been disqualified? Again a diminished pattern, but a persistent one: In Fiscal Year 1967, 1.6 per cent for whites, 1.4 per cent for blacks. (As to the charge that blacks were being used for cannon fodder, to the best of my knowledge at no time in the post-War period has the black proportion of the armed forces equalled the black proportion of the relevant age group.) For whatever reason, Southerners in general do best on medical tests. In the period 1953-1969, of draftees examined for military service, 35 per cent of whites and 65 per cent of blacks came from the South. In that period, the proportion disqualified for medical reasons on initial preinduction examination was lowest for both blacks and whites in the South Atlantic states.

Hard to accept? Precisely. And yet is it really inconceivable? The staff paper from the Pentagon concluded:

We cannot rule out the possibility that the differences in disqualifica-

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> tion rates by race and education are in fact due to real differences in physical condition. . . . For example, white youths have a higher prevalence of medical disqualifications for psychiatric disorders and allergic disorders than Negroes, and for both races the rates for these disorders are higher for men with greater education.

Not entirely inconceivable. A report of the National Center for Health Statistics on "Differentials in Health Characteristics by Color" for 1965-1967 notes: "The proportion of white males with one or more chronic conditions exceeded that of nonwhite males in each age group. . . ."

Still, I cannot really bring myself to believe that blacks have better health than whites, Southerners than Northerners, grade school graduates than college graduates. I would be happy to learn it *is* so, to learn that people who get the dirty end of the stick in so much have been lucky about something. But I suspect that it probably isn't. The Defense Department study has recently been finished—it reveals a narrowing of the black/white gap—but not much more is really understood now than in 1963. One assumes that the data reflect a greater desire and ability of better-off persons to avoid military service; but one does not *know*. My point is this: *What if the data pointed in the opposite direction? How reluctant would we then be to accept them?* The answer is obvious. If the health differentials in these data ran in the expected direction, they would be routinely accepted (as were the mental test outcomes) and incessantly cited as "proof" of how very bad things are. Since they are not useful for such "proof," they are ignored. And yet so much in our data—and in our society—runs in different and unexpected directions!

* * *

How shall we deal with the "many body" problem, which is to say, the need to keep three or more vectors in mind when assessing the state of social well-being at this time? A tentative answer would have to be that neither the will nor the capacity to do so exists in sufficient degree to make an impress on social policy. Still, resources are limited, and if we refuse to recognize situations which may be improving, we may fail to concentrate our efforts on situations which are not. This is a good formula for confirming the posture that everything *is* getting worse. It is a formula that many find so very enchanting these days.

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Toward a future that has no past— reflections on the fate of Blacks in the Americas

ORLANDO PATTERSON

THE claim that there is an underlying unity in the New World black experience has been made so often that most people now take it for granted. And yet, in spite of the frequency of these assertions, few have taken the trouble to examine exactly how they may be justified. What is it in the experience of Blacks throughout the Americas (and according to some, the entire world) which establishes the claim that they constitute, in any meaningful sense, a distinct group?

For many, the answer is that the New World black experience deserves to be treated as a unit simply because those who share it are black. This view may not be as spurious as it appears at first sight. But what is extraordinary about its unqualified acceptance is the fact that the most cursory examination of New World black peoples presents us with an overwhelming impression of diversity rather than uniformity. I do think that there are important uniformities in the black experience—that, indeed, the trend is toward complete uniformity—and these uniformities I shall consider later at some length; for the moment, however, in order to place these later comments clearly in perspective, let us examine some of the more important differences among the Blacks of the New World.

Historically, there have been tremendous differences in the con-

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ditions of Blacks and in their responses to these varying conditions. True, there was the common experience of slavery. But slavery took many forms in the New World, ranging from the highly capitalistic, large-scale, mono-crop plantation systems of the West Indies to the secondary slave system of the United States and 18th-century Brazil (where slavery was merely one of the important bases of the economy and society) to the marginal slavery that existed in places such as Puerto Rico, Mexico, and the Northern states of the United States. These varying conditions produced, naturally, varying responses on the part of the black slaves. In the large-scale, capitalistic slave systems, where Blacks comprised the large majority of the population, they were unable as a group to reproduce themselves (due to the small proportion of women, the masters' discouragement of child rearing, brutal treatment, and the high rate of infant mortality), and therefore these societies always contained a high ratio of immigrant Africans to Blacks born in the New World. And where members of the white ruling class cared little for the society they ruled, except as a place to make or restore their fortunes prior to a life of absentee leisure, the possibility of slave revolts and the survival of aboriginal African cultural elements was relatively great. On the other hand, where (as in the United States) the opposite set of conditions prevailed—Whites outnumbering Blacks; a stable white and black population, with a low immigrant ratio; a large, free population having little to do directly with slavery; and a highly developed local culture—there could be few revolts, and the pressures towards accommodation and acculturation were well nigh irresistible.

There is also the popular, though largely erroneous view that cultural differences between the white slave owners of the New World —in particular, those between the Latin and non-Latin masters— were significant in determining the kinds of opportunities open to Blacks and the responses they were likely to make to their oppression. While such cultural differences are not to be neglected, it seems to me that what may be called "the Tannenbaum-Elkins interpretation" of New World slave systems has not stood up to recent scholarly criticism. The Latin master was no more humane than his Anglo-Saxon counterpart, and the view that in the Latin areas the status of the slave did not become identified with the status of black people is sheer nonsense. True, laws existed in the Latin areas which, on paper, offered greater protection to the slave; also true, is the fact that the Catholic Church took a moral stand against slavery. But laws are only as good as the men who administer them,

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and the facts speak against the rosy picture of Latin humanity implied in the letter of their slave codes. As far as the Catholic Church is concerned, all that need be said is that in many Latin slave systems the Church was often the largest and the harshest of slave owners.

In one important respect, however, the slave system in Latin areas did significantly differ from those in non-Latin areas. This was in the greater opportunities offered for manumission. But the consequences of the more liberal manumission policy for black slaves in Latin America have been exaggerated. It did mean that there was a larger and more "loyal" freed black group during the period of slavery; but this has had little lasting consequence except, perhaps, that the more elite segments of the black communities in the Latin areas today are actually more alienated from the mass of the black community than they are in the non-Latin areas of the New World.

The post-emancipation and modern eras of black history saw the crystallization of regional autonomy and national boundaries in the New World, and added perhaps the most important basis of division among Blacks of the hemisphere. Today, black peoples have cultural, social, and modal personality traits that are peculiar to that section of the race living within specific national and/or regional boundaries. These peculiar traits are of two types in those cases where Blacks constitute a minority group: traits which Blacks share with all their fellow nationals, and those which are peculiar to fellow Blacks of the same nationality. Thus, U.S. Blacks are different from other Blacks in the New World by virtue of their Americanness—their commitment to certain kinds of values and modes of behavior which are typical of an industrial society. This is particularly true of a substantial number of middle-class Blacks in the United States. But of course, black Americans also have their own subcultural peculiarities, which they do not share with other Americans—but which they also do not share with non-American Blacks. Many black American intellectuals are prone to insist on the universality within the black race of precisely these traits; this is understandable, and under some conditions, as we shall see later, the claim might become true.

Drawing racial lines

Let us, however, look at some of those areas where such an assertion of universality is clearly false. First, both the racial experience and the response to this experience—ideologically and psycho-

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logically—of black Americans differ from those of their Caribbean and Latin American counterparts. America has what may be called a "*classificatory*" racial system—anyone who is not completely white and has the slightest trace of black ancestry is considered black. This has had important social and psychological consequences for the U.S. black community. Socially, it has meant that the elite section of the black community was forced to identify with the mass of black people. Until a decade or so ago, of course, there were many among the light-skinned middle-class Blacks who resented this forced identity, and would have preferred a closer relation with the white group with whom they had more in common genetically. Yet the fact remains that they were obliged to offer their social, educational, and leadership skills, such as they were, to the black community. While this was beneficial in many ways for the mass of Blacks, politically—as Martin Kilson has shown—this leadership was essentially conservative and self-serving. More recently, this group has thrown in its lot with the mass of black people, and although the major base of black political leadership is today proletarian, at least in origin, the fact that the educationally and socially more favored brown-skinned elite now fully identify with their black brothers has been of tremendous significance.

In the West Indies and Latin areas, on the other hand, racial categorization has been "*denotative*" rather than classificatory—that is, an elaborate racial terminology exists to describe and differentiate shades of color, ranging from pure Negro to pure Caucasian. This racial terminology accurately reflects actual social relations and, more important, is accepted and used by all groups. To complicate matters, and further increase the divisions among the New World Blacks, a distinction must be made between two subtypes of denotative racial systems; one we shall call "continuous denotative categorization," the other, "discontinuous denotative categorization." Continuous denotative systems of racial categorization are found mainly in the West Indies and especially in the English and Dutch areas. In these societies, the precise gradation of shades includes the white group and, indeed, penetrates it, so that some gradations are found within what in other areas would be simply Caucasian or white. Nowhere in the West Indies are Portuguese considered as white as, say, English Caucasians; and Syrians, Lebanese, and other Middle Easterners hardly make it within the white group at all—rather, they have to be satisfied with some such classification as "high color" or even "high brown." At the same time, very light-skinned mulattoes may well be considered more "near-white"

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than such South Europeans or Middle Easterners. On the other hand, those pure North European Whites who have low social status are rarely classified as Whites, even where, as in Barbados, St. Vincent, and Grenada, they may have blond hair and blue eyes. In such cases special terms are invented for them, the best example being the description of Barbadian poor Whites as "red-legs." Indeed, the designation "red" is often used in the West Indian system of racial terminology to describe all white or approximately-white groups whose racial type does not match their expected social status. Thus, a light-skinned person who is a manager of an estate is sometimes designated white, possibly even "Buckra"—the highest socio-racial term; but a man of identical somatic type who is middle-class or lower is "red."

There is a difference between this rather complicated, continuous system and the one prevailing in South America (especially Brazil), which, while it is linguistically more elaborate, is socially less complicated. We call this system "discontinuous" because the group at the very top is exclusively white (unlike in the West Indies, where a significant segment of the upper elite is now black) and self-consciously preserves its Caucasian racial identity. Thus Latin America closely approximates the United States in the total and exclusive domination of the elite by Caucasians. But it differs radically from the United States in the fact that below the elite a color-class gradation similar to that in the West Indies exists, and the same kind of color-class interpenetration takes place. "Money whitens," as they say in Brazil, but only to a point. A rigid racial caste barrier excludes all but pure Caucasians from top positions.

Another way in which the Latin system differs from that of the United States is in the fact that the all-white elite members accept the rules of the racial color-class game as it affects other segments of their society. In the United States, where the color-class hierarchy within the black group also exists, or existed to a great extent until recently, the white elite as well as other members of the white majority remain aloof from this system, seeing it as something internal to the black community. Thus, white employers, when they do decide to employ Blacks, rarely discriminate on a color basis among Blacks; such discrimination is automatic in Latin America. Or, to take a more telling example: In Latin America, a lower-middle-class Caucasian father may object strongly to his daughter marrying a black person of equal class standing; he would object less to a son-in-law who is mulatto; even less to one who was a quadroon; he might even give his grudging approval to a wealthy upper-class

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mulatto; and quite probably he would strongly approve a match between his daughter and a wealthy quadroon. In the United States, a lower-middle-class White would consider any match with any person classified as black (even where the "black" person was phenotypically similar to him) a disaster.

The implications of these subsystems of racial categorization for the various segments of Blacks in the Americas are striking. In the United States, as we have already noted, while until recently the classificatory system has been the source of much pain and resentment on the part of the light-skinned elite, it has, ironically, had a beneficial effect on the mass of Blacks. For one thing, it has meant that the number of people designated "black" or "Negro" has been far greater than it would have been in a denotative system of racial classification. Secondly, the rejection of all non-Whites by the white majority has meant that all shades of the black group have been forced to find a common meeting ground among themselves. Since this meeting ground could not be purely physical, it had to be cultural and social—hence the strong emphasis on cultural nationalism in the drive towards racial solidarity on the part of the Negro population in the United States. For this cultural nationalism to be meaningful, however, it had to emphasize precisely the life style which was peculiar to the black community; and the traditional cradle of this peculiar life style has always been the black lower class. Thus, once they decided to throw in their lot with the black masses, it was imperative that the black middle classes emphasize and celebrate the lower-class patterns of the community and reject their own middle-class life style. The lower-class bias of the present wave of black activism, therefore, is partly explained in terms of the classificatory system of racial categorization which prevails in the United States. We shall return to this matter later on.

"Money whitens"

The situation is quite different in the other two areas of the hemisphere, Latin America and the Caribbean. In Latin America, the discontinuous denotative system has had a conservative and politically crippling effect on the mass of the non-white population. In the first place, "Black" means primarily what it says in these areas; all other shades between pure somatic Black and White consider themselves separate groups, and are so considered by other groups. Thus, there is no pressure to establish solidarity with other non-white groups—indeed, quite the contrary. There is a fair degree of

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mobility in this region, but it is all directed towards "lightening the group," mainly through intermarriage. The expression "money whitens" in fact means two things: First, money whitens in the social sense, or more precisely, in its effect on social perception of color. But more dramatic is the way in which money literally whitens, from one generation to the next. This real change in color derives from the rules of marriage, which invariably operate along the principle of marrying lighter when marrying up. What all this means for the genuinely black or Negro population is that there is a constant, almost literal, creaming off—both within and between generations—of its most talented, ambitious, and motivated members. At the same time, downwardly mobile men invariably marry darker women. An unsuccessful mulatto will often find it much easier to select a darker woman than one of his own color type; and since the mobility of progeny invariably is more strongly determined by the father's status than by the mother's, it is more than likely that the darker progeny (from the father's point of view) will, in turn, find it easier to marry yet further down the color-class ladder. Thus, the pure black group finds itself in the unfortunate situation of having an upward out-migration of its most successful members, and at the same time a downward in-migration of the failures of the other groups. The genetic implications of this weird pattern of mobility would doubtless be fascinating to many, but I, for one, have neither the aptitude nor the taste for exploring this matter. It is enough to say that, purely from the social and political points of view, this is a most undesirable state of affairs for the mass of black people in Latin America.

The great irony of this miserable system of socio-racial mobility is that the Latin American countries, especially Brazil, have prided themselves on their so-called "harmonious" and fluid racial systems. If by harmony we mean a lack of violence and tension, then one must admit that the system is indeed harmonious; but it is the harmony of the damned, of a mute, leaderless people trapped in one of the most ingenious systems of racial and caste oppression that has ever existed. The sad thing is that North American sociologists, anthropologists, and journalists are largely to blame for the perpetuation of this myth. And we can now at least partly begin to understand how North American scholars and observers were deluded by this system. It was clearly a confusion brought about by a clash of two modes of racial categorization: North Americans, with their classificatory system, continued to see all non-Whites as "Blacks" in the American sense of that term, and were therefore highly impressed by finding

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Blacks (so defined), in all but the elite segments of the society. It never dawned on them, until recently, that within the context of Brazilian society, with its denotative system of racial categorization, such high-status Blacks were in no way "black" and that a set of attitudes expressed towards a mulatto would simply not apply to a pure Negro.

The West Indies

In the non-Latin West Indies, the situation is again quite different. True, as in the Latin areas, there is the same pattern of marrying lighter with upward social mobility; there is also the same variation of racial perception with varying class positions. However, several factors make this system radically different from that of the Latin areas.

First, these are all overwhelmingly black, or at any rate non-white societies; the white population is nowhere above three per cent of the total population, and is often less than one per cent. Thus, the elaborate class-caste distinctions simply could not exist. There were just not enough people of mixed blood to make it work. Even during the colonial period of the present century, as these societies became more and more complex, and as the occupational structure became more specialized, there were simply not enough brown- and light-skinned people to fill all the lower-middle-class and middle-class vacancies. From as early as the turn of the present century, genuine Blacks were dominating the teaching profession and the lower echelons of the civil service. With political independence, this pattern has gained momentum. While the post-War industrialization has not so far been a success, the economic policies of the new governments of the area have considerably expanded the number of middle- and upper-middle-class vacancies. Combined with the withdrawal of the colonial elite and the establishment of immigration quotas, this has created a situation where elite expansion, if not replacement, can only be filled by upwardly mobile Negroes.

Another important difference in the West Indian situation, of course, is the peculiar political development of these societies. Unlike Latin America and the United States, they remained European colonies until the 1960's (Haiti and the Spanish islands excepted). The attainment of political independence has meant, not just an expansion of middle-class roles and individual black mobility, but also the replacement of the former British governing elite by a new-

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ly emerged group of native, predominantly black politicians. However "Marxist" or "Third World" one's analysis of these systems may be, however marginal the control of their economies by these new leaders, and however "bourgeois" the new nationalist elite (matters to which we shall return later), the fact remains that Blacks now control the political system and that this has had significant effects —at least on the social and psychological levels—on these societies. Most West Indians pass their childhoods in communities where they never once come in contact with a white person, or where all the "significant others" of their social universe are black or brown people. Teacher, preacher, lawyer, policeman, judge, civil servant, politician —these are now almost all black or at least non-white.

This is not to say that one grows up in the West Indies without an awareness of Whites. The white presence in the society, however, is mediated almost entirely through the cultural system: It is through such agencies as the school, the church, and the mass media, as well as through the value system acquired from one's parents, that one learns the status and meaning of being white. Thus, in the process of his socialization the West Indian acquires both an extraordinary amount of knowledge about white or European customs and a deep sense of the superiority of these patterns of behavior and of the status of those who share them. But there are few, if any, white role models. European values are reinforced not by the crushing presence of the carriers of the alien "superior" culture, but mainly by fellow black and brown role models who have mastered the art of performing in accordance with the "superior" cultural patterns.

Black culture as peasant culture

The black American is both culturally and socially overwhelmed by the presence of the white majority. The West Indian is only in part culturally-dominated and grows up free of any crushing white physical or social presence. And yet, ironically, it is a fact that today the black West Indian—especially if he is middle-class—has a stronger sense of the "superiority" of white European culture than does his North American counterpart. How do we explain this paradox? Why is it that in spite of a greater African heritage and a more distinctly "black" culture of his own, as well as the shelter of a more exclusively black community, the West Indian is now less "liberated" in his view of European culture?

The paradox is only partly explained by recent developments in the United States. To be sure, the intense and sustained growth of

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racial consciousness and solidarity in recent years among black Americans must figure in any explanation of their greater sense of racial and cultural pride. However, a more important factor explaining this paradox is the peculiar bifurcation of values which the West Indian inherits. This cultural bifurcation is typical of all peasant peoples. Like peasants everywhere, the West Indian acquires as his most immediate and workable heritage a subculture which is essentially his own, based on the exigencies of tropical rural life and on surviving elements of the disintegrated cultures of West Africa brought over by his slave ancestors. For all practical purposes, it is this culture which directs and guides his actions: He normally speaks the language of this culture, whether it is the Afro-French Creole of Haiti and Martinique, or the Afro-English Creole of Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad; he worships in the religious cults of this culture—Voodoo in Haiti, Cumina and Poccomania in Jamaica, Shango in Trinidad; he learns and uses the folklore of this culture, its dances, songs, and magic; he learns the love and reverence of the soil and the values necessary to survive on it; he acquires the dogged pride, the aggressiveness, the suspicion and envy, and the biting, earthy humor characteristic of all peasant peoples, but culturally flavored by the remnants of his half-remembered African past.

But like all peasant peoples, his society is only a part of a wider social system which includes the metropolis and the "civilized" people of the city. He has to participate in the economy of this wider social system when he goes to market to sell his cash crops or buy the goods he cannot produce. He has to pay his taxes, go to court, reckon with the bureaucrats. He has to vote, and he is shrewd enough not to pass this by, however skeptical he may be of the city politicians. Like peasants everywhere, he realizes that the urban center also has its own way of life, its own "high-culture"—and he grudgingly concedes the superiority of this culture, as peasants do in China, India, and all other parts of the world where an urban elite must support its higher standard of living with the sweat and surplus of the rural masses. The only difference between the West Indian and other peasants is that the social system of which he is a part extends beyond the boundaries of his own nation—there is not one, but two levels of urban domination: the capital city of his own country and the metropolis of "the mother country" of the empire within which he is a subject. And, similarly, there is not one but two levels of cultural domination—two high-cultures: the creole high-culture of his own country, the carriers of which are mainly the

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successful members of his own race, as well as the creolized native Whites; and the pure high-culture of the imperial metropolis, the carriers of which he meets rarely, if at all, in the form of governors, top-level bureaucrats, and capitalists.

Now while this peasant relationship in the West Indies is necessarily more complex than that of other rural folk throughout the world, the fact remains that it is qualitatively no different; in the same way that peasants the world over maintain their own sense of personal and cultural dignity while conceding the "superiority" of the high-culture and paying their respect to those who share it, so does the West Indian. And like peasants the world over, his cultural dualism is in no way abnormal. Many Western social scientists, and quite a few West Indians, their conceptions distorted by their ethnocentric biases and by that crudest of psycho-anthropological concepts—the notion of "internalization"—have argued that the West Indian has an abnormal split modal personality and a negative self-image, as the result of the internalization of two sets of values. This is sheer nonsense. That there are problems in the modal personality of the West Indian, there can be no doubt; but these spring from other sources. The West Indian handles the high-culture of his social universe in much the same way that all other peasant peoples have done since the dawn of the urban revolution. He makes a distinction between private and public values; between his everyday experience and the special occasion; between the intimate "us" and the formal "them." For his ordinary, everyday, intimate, and private existence, he brings into play one complex of cultural patterns, with its own scale of values, its own ideas concerning good and evil, beauty and ugliness, right and wrong. But he must also live in the wider world of which he is a part—the world he learns about mainly in school, but also from his peers. In dealing with this world, he "moves up" to its requirements. He will go to the Church of England or a Roman Catholic Cathedral on Sunday mornings to pay his respects to the state religion and rub shoulders with bureaucrats in much the same way that Chinese peasants worshipped at the state shrine hundreds of years ago; and, like his Chinese counterpart, on Sunday nights he changes from his Sunday-best into something more practical and attends the more emotionally satisfying and communally organic (Afro-West Indian) cult, where he works himself up to an ecstatic pitch of possession by an African "power." Similarly, he will make a desperate effort to learn and speak the Queen's English on all important and formal occasions, whereas ordinarily he speaks his own creole language or dialect.

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"Making it" in the high-culture

As long as he remains a peasant, the West Indian faces no problem in conceding the superiority of the urban high-culture; for it is a concession that will hardly affect his own sense of dignity and security, in view of the remoteness of the high-culture and his highly specialized interaction with it.

The situation is different, however, for the upwardly mobile peasant or, more commonly, the son of the peasant who "makes it" in the urban high-culture. The middle-class West Indian continues to accept the superiority of the urban high-culture—indeed, it is precisely those who are most impressed with the superiority of this culture and its values who "make it." Unlike his peasant kinsmen, however, he no longer has the cocoon of the folk culture to fall back into when the culture he adopts begins to assault his dignity. The West Indian who throws in his lot with the high-culture goes through a terrible process of deliberate spiritual exile and re-culturation; for he soon learns that what little knowledge the peasant has of the high-culture is of a highly specialized nature, only enough to get him by in his limited contact with it. He learns, too, that the peasant's grasp of the content of this culture is essentially that of the "bumpkin," the butt of every urban sophisticate's humor during the ritual of the cocktail. Soon the awful truth descends on him that the peasant hasn't really learned anything of the high-culture at all; in his doggedly parochial and creative way he has merely reinterpreted the high-culture in his own terms, so that even those specialized, formal areas of the high-culture which he thought he knew are really more peasant than urban. Thus, cut off from the bosom of the mountain village, he must not only learn a new way of life, but first unlearn an old one. The only thing that keeps him going is the one asset—if indeed it is an asset—he acquired from his peasant upbringing: the respect for, and the deep sense of, the superiority of the metropolitan high-culture.

Most West Indians fail in this extreme cultural effort, but not entirely. To the degree that they fail, they fall from the high promise of the urban grammar schools down the social ladder, like so many drones failing to mate a queen bee, till they settle at their own level of social and cultural competence. Together these "failures" make up the potpourri of semi-peasant, semi-creolized-European statuses that sociologists call the "native middle classes." For those few who pass this first test of re-culturation, a final hurdle remains—the second level of the urban high-culture found in the imperial or ex-imperial metropolis itself, in Holland, France, or Britain.

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In the process of learning this final and highest level of the European high-culture, something strange takes place in the experience of the Westernized West Indian. Ironically, it is usually only when he is in the European metropolis that he becomes deeply conscious of his race. This comes about through the simple experience of living in the full glare of the imperial high-culture, through the sudden, overwhelming experience of being in a racial minority, and through the pedestrian but utterly catastrophic encounter with the European working classes. A British or French colonial administrator caught up with his own eccentric version of the white man's burden, the West Indian soon learns, is one thing; a London or Parisian landlady is quite another.

But the social shock of the metropolis, it must be noted, also takes place at precisely the same time that his vision of the world is being broadened, at the same time that he is becoming politically and socially aware. Thus, just when he reaches the peak of cultural achievement, the West Indian intellectual also begins to worry about the problem of national and racial identity. It is at this point that he takes up writing, the peculiar cultural reflex of the West Indian abroad; and in truth, there has never been a West Indian living in the metropolis—suddenly fired with a sense of racial and cultural outrage, shocked at the hypocrisy and lies of imperial trusteeship, betrayed by the myth of the mother country, and yet inspired by it all—who does not fancy his true calling to be that of a writer. From this point, a clear path follows; the need for intellectual emancipation is met through a deliberate agonizing over race and nationality. The West Indies is now seen from the viewpoint of the metropolis as a warped colonial hell-hole which must be liberated. Ideologically, a "Third World" stance follows in which—together with willing (though always more sober and skeptical) African students—the problem of the race all over the world is seen as one. There is a public confession of lack of racial pride, a strident condemnation of the cultural and racial oppression of the West Indies, and often, after a course or two in sociology, grand theories about the split personality of the West Indian peasant and the national neurosis of the West Indian.

Alienation at the top and the bottom

Objectively, of course, this is all totally unrealistic. But since the most articulate West Indians have made a profession of insisting upon its truth, it was not long before the rest of the world, not to

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mention West Indians themselves, came to believe it all. Much of the interpretation of the problems of racial identity offered by West Indian intellectuals and scholars is, in truth, largely a projection of these intellectuals' own problems. The peasant West Indian does not have an identity problem; nor does the middle-class West Indian or local elite member who never attempted to acquire the metropolitan high-culture. The local, non-intellectual West Indian bourgeois has no identity problem, for he is thoroughly convinced of the superiority of the local creolized version of the European culture he has adopted, and is well satisfied with things as they are. He is annoyed by people who raise uncomfortable questions about the excessive white domination of the economy and by his own pro-European biases, and prefers not to discuss them. But if forced into a corner, he is likely to admit his biases and to defend both the right of Europeans to control the economy and the superiority of creolized European culture. At the same time he becomes violently offended if accused of having a racial inferiority complex—a complicated, tough-minded, and quite incomprehensible person, the West Indian bourgeois.

There is, however, a third group of West Indians who, curiously, have much in common with the alienated intellectual elite. These are the recently urbanized peasants—the growing mass of aimless, unemployed men and women who live in the cramped hovels of the shanties. This is the only segment of the masses with a sense of loss and of isolation. Having come to the city and been rejected by it, they now spurn this urban culture. As in the case of the elite in the imperial metropolis, their awareness of being cut off from their roots is accompanied by an acute sense of the white domination of the economy. Like the intellectuals abroad, they seek for "dis-alienation" by evolving a mystique of Blackness and a political ideology of black unity. Like the intellectuals, too, they reassert their identity with Africa; indeed, Africa figures as paradise in the recently evolved millenarian religion of the Ras Tafari cult in Jamaica, a religion in which Haile Selassie is God, the Whites are Lucifer and his fallen angels, and Africa is heaven.

We find, then, that the most successful and the least successful of West Indians end up having most in common, in their shared sense of loss and alienation and in their search for a re-identification with Africa. These two groups are also the most race-conscious elements of the society. The remaining peasants, who are most secure in their sense of racial identity and who have the strongest links (in terms of cultural continuities) with Africa, care least about racial consciousness and have little contemporary interest in Africa. The

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middle classes, the most thoroughly West Indian of all, spurn racial consciousness and have no sense of historical loss or discontinuity because history does not exist for them—it is truly "bunk"; all that is important is the material present and the images of the future seen and coveted nightly on canned American television programs.

How the United States is different

In contrast, the black American experience is both simpler and more terrifying—simpler in that there is not the same degree of sub-cultural variation, nor the same elaborate love-hate relationship with European culture; and more terrifying in the all-pervasive presence of the white group and white culture, and the crushing sense of racial isolation and despair. Thus, the recent drive towards solidarity and social equality has not been restricted to certain segments of the black population, but concerns the whole group, and the sense of racial solidarity envelops everyone. The more polarized nature of the black American experience, as well as the lack of racial middle-men or of any significant number of Blacks with a vested interest in the American system, has led of necessity to a more militant political consciousness. Black Americans now lead the rest of the hemisphere in the intensity of their commitment to a sense of racial identity and to a black cultural revival.

In addition, the quality of intellectual leadership among Blacks in the United States differs radically from both its Latin American and its West Indian counterparts. The black American intellectual is increasingly an activist; he comes to the world of ideas and reflections often after a lifetime of racial awareness; he frequently is not formally educated, has rejected the higher levels of white culture without attempting to learn it, and, most recently, is often from the ghetto. The West Indian intellectual, as we have seen, becomes racially conscious only after he has entered the elite, and discovers "Blackness" only after he has been irrevocably ensnared by European culture. It is the culture of what later becomes "the enemy" which has radicalized him to the point where he can begin to conceive of it as alien; and, inevitably, it is with the intellectual tools of the alien culture that he seeks to reject it and to reform his own identity—a truly impossible task. Yet it is this impossible pursuit which explains the remarkable yet somehow fey vitality of West Indian art and literature. "Negritude" was a West Indian movement, and its failure was a West Indian failure. Cesaire and Damas could only have been West Indians, and so too Fanon, the wandering, tragic apostle of

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violence. The same is true for V. S. Naipaul, an Indian version of the West Indian tragedy, whose elegant, obsessive, and ironic condemnation of his West Indian homeland is, no doubt to his own disgust, so very, very West Indian. Then, on another level—one most immediately understandable to black Americans—there is the case of Marcus Garvey, who, even as he led the black American masses towards his bizarre vision of African repatriation and racial consciousness, never once ceased being a West Indian—in his arrogance, in his ignorance and patronage of Africa, in his grand imperial vision regarding that continent, in the poetic absurdity of his politics, in his quiet death in Great Britain (where else?), and, most recently, in his posthumous elevation to the rank of national hero in Jamaica by the very bourgeois elite who, while he lived, spurned him.

II

So far, I have dealt with the enormous differences among Blacks of the New World. I must now move on to those elements which they share, a few of which have already been anticipated.

Historically, Blacks of the New World all had a common area of origin—the West Coast of Africa. While there were numerous social and linguistic groups within this area, recent scholarship strongly supports the view that certain structural and cultural uniformities underlie the outward diversity of the region. Similarly, almost all Blacks, with the exception of those few who came from the Iberian Peninsula in the early 16th century, share a history in which their ancestors went through the shattering horrors of the middle passage, of detribalization and culture loss, and of the shock of re-culturation in the slave camps of the New World.

Now we have already seen that beyond this point, the slave systems of the New World differed considerably in the kinds of environments they presented the slave, and that the response of the Blacks varied with these varying conditions. Socially, culturally, and politically it is the differences rather than the similarities of the Black experience during slavery that are most impressive, differences that speak eloquently of the remarkable ingenuity and adaptability and capacity for survival of the race.

The "Sambo" syndrome

However, there is one respect in which the black response to the sustained horror of enslavement was strikingly similar: the psycho-

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logical adjustment to the system. My own position on this matter, let me make it clear at the outset, is diametrically opposed to that of Stanley Elkins in his work, *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional Life*. Elkins' thesis, it will be recalled, is the strikingly simple—one might say simple-minded—one that, in response to the peculiar conditions of Southern slavery, the black slave developed a personality syndrome which was fairly accurately reflected in that complex of Southern lore relating to a Negro personality known as "Sambo." He writes:

> The characteristics that have been claimed for the type come principally from Southern lore. Sambo, the typical plantation slave, was docile but irresponsible, loyal but lazy, humble but chronically given to lying and stealing. His behavior was full of infantile silliness, and his talk inflated with childish exaggeration. His relationship with his master was one of utter dependence and child-like attachment. It was, indeed, this child-like quality that was the very key to his being. Although the merest hint of Sambo's manhood might fill the Southern breast with scorn, the child 'in his place' could be both exasperating and lovable.

The burden of Elkins' thesis is that there is more than a core of truth in this stereotype. However, being a liberal historian, he rejects racist biological explanations of this phenomenon and, instead, attempts to explain it by a superficial and somewhat confused appeal to various social-psychological theories, and by a plausible, but completely irrelevant analogy with the inmates' experiences in the concentration camps of Hitler's Germany.

Supporting Elkins' major thesis is his view that this Sambo syndrome was a peculiarly American phenomenon: "One searches in vain through the literature of the Latin American slave system for the Sambo of oral tradition, the perpetual child incapable of maturity. How is this to be explained? If Sambo is not a product of race and not simply a product of slavery in the abstract, then it must be related to our own peculiar variety of it." Not content just to create a new intellectual myth of his own—namely, the myth that Southern racist stereotypes of Black modal personality are not a myth—Elkins also totally accepts and adapts to his own purposes the myth of the friendly Latin master.

The truth is that there was something of the "Sambo" in the personality of the Black American slave—but far from being peculiar to the U.S. slave, such traits were found not only in all areas of the New World, but among *all slaves of all times*. No one who has read the classical Greek and Roman plays, especially the tragedies of Euripides, the later comedies of Aristophanes, and the comedies of

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Terence and Plautus, can be in any doubt concerning the existence of a "Sambo-like" dimension in the personality of the ancient slave. But the Ancients were neither so foolish, nor so clouded in their perception by half-digested psychological theories, that they did not see through the "Sambo" aspect of their slaves' behavior. The *servus bonus* was always balanced by the *servus callidus*. Moreover, to the realistic Ancient slaveholder, no slave was to be trusted completely, however "good." This view comes across clearly in the very earliest extant Latin work, the *De Agricultura* of the elder Cato. Plato, too, was in no doubt concerning the inherent propensity of the slave to revolt, given the right conditions. But it was Seneca who said it all in one of the most succinct and telling remarks ever made about slavery: "*Quot servi, tot hostes*" ("As many slaves, so many enemies").

Master and slave

The master-slave relationship is best seen as a form of psychic warfare. The Sambo personality syndrome was merely the outward manifestation of one aspect of this warfare. Sambo could, indeed, be exasperating; he could surely be lovable and humorous and lazy. But the clowning, the laziness, the childish adoration were all part of a deadly serious game, a game which the master saw one way and the slave another, but in which the slave always had the upper hand, since this differing perception of their relationship was precisely what he wanted.

In this relationship, if the slave is to salvage his dignity, if he is to preserve an ounce of pride and humanity, he must do two things: First, he must find a way to protect his person from the merciless onslaught of the master; and second, he must, in the act of protecting himself, find a way of hitting back. He must rebel, occasionally openly, but for the most part covertly, subtly—indeed, so subtly that the perfect stroke of rebellion must ideally appear to the master as the ultimate act of submission.

Thus, it is in the slave's interest that the master does not know or care what he thinks or feels. In this non-interdependent relationship, the satisfaction of psychic vengeance comes, not from directly hurting the master, but from knowing that what one feels and thinks is not what one is expected to feel and think—indeed, would be the source of outrage for the master should he have been in a position to know what is going on. It is a private vengeance, one occurring almost involuntarily—the vengeance of the witch, rather than the sorcerer.

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It is in this context that one must seek to interpret the slave's behavior, rather than in an appeal to naively ethnocentric psychological theories. Let us take one example: the notorious propensity of the slave to steal. For the slave, stealing is first a symbolic declaration of absurdity. A fellow human being claims you as his own property, seeks to petrify you and make you a thing, a chattel. This is absurd, and the absurdity is revealed not only in the act of stealing but in the universal justification offered for it by all slaves from the dawn of antiquity—that it is not possible for one part of a man's property to steal another part, any more than a man's overheated pot can be accused of stealing his potatoes. In punishing the slave for stealing, the master, by his very brutality, is forced to acknowledge the humanity of the slave; you don't beat your horse for stealing your hay, or your pot for burning your potatoes.

But stealing involves more than a declaration of absurdity and a forced acknowledgement on the master's part of the slave's humanity. It is also an act of insurrection. The master's property is a sacred thing, the raison d'etre of slavery. Indeed, as Marx has so convincingly argued, the specific individualistic slavery of classical antiquity evolved from the "latent," "general" and sporadic slavery of Oriental despotism only after the emergence of private property.

In claiming the master's property as his own, the slave undermines the whole basis of his social order. It is to stab the foe from inside the belly: property stealing from property. Sometimes this is merely symbolic; often, however, it indeed becomes a threat to the entire economic system. In the Caribbean, for example, masters routinely wrote off 10 per cent of their entire output as a result of the stealing of their slaves, and this 10 per cent was often the critical margin of profit that would have averted financial disaster.

Finally, stealing was a negative assertion of moral worth. It is a curious fact that stealing is one of the most peculiarly human of all activities. Indeed, stealing occurs as a problem only in relatively advanced cultures. In a system based on private property, stealing is the most cardinal of sins. Thus, when the slave steals, steals almost obsessively, he is, more than anything else, openly flaunting the moral code of his master. He dares his master to catch him; he wants to be exposed. The legend of the Negro in the chicken coop has deep moral roots. One does not raid, of all things, a potentially clamorous chicken coop if one does not, in the depth of one's being, secretly wish to be caught red-handed. When the outraged master screams, "You are a thief," he has given away everything, for implied in his accusation is a critical judgment: You are a moral being who is

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responsible for your act. Anger and its sequel of brutality and punishment expose the moral worth of the slave, even as they destroy his flesh. It is the final stroke of absurdity and moral affirmation: The master who insists that his slave is property beats and depreciates his own property for behaving in precisely the way property and brute stock is expected to behave.

In this same manner, it is possible to explain all those behavioral traits of the slave in his relationship with his master referred to as the "Sambo" complex in the United States or "Quashi" in Jamaica. It is also easy to show that such traits are to be found among all slaves of the New World. But enough has been said to show the naivety of the Elkins' thesis, as well as to give some indication of the true quality of one area of the slave experience—an experience which, to repeat, all Blacks in the New World shared.

A people without a past

The question we must now ask is: What exactly is the significance of this shared past for Blacks today? There are two responses to this question—one is philosophical in nature, the other sociological. The philosophical answer makes a certain assumption about the relationships between the past and the present; it assumes that there is always a link between the two. This assumption has deep roots in the culture of almost all peoples. For a group such as the Jews, this link between past and present is perhaps the most important single factor sustaining its identity. To be a Jew, writes Daniel Bell, "is to be part of a community woven by memory."

Now, this view has a powerful hold on most men. On one level, Blacks would seem to be no exception—certainly no black intellectual would deny the view that black people are above all a "community woven by memory." Were this true on all levels, we could leave the matter here; certainly it would fit nicely with our previous analysis of the common experience of slavery. But, alas, we cannot leave the matter here. For even though Bell's statement would be meaningful to all black *intellectuals,* it is not at all certain that it would be of any significance to all black *people* in the Americas—indeed, to any black person of the Hemisphere other than the few who happen to be intellectuals.

It is only on the normative and self-conscious level that a black intellectual can honestly accept the historical linkage of past and present, with its gift of a contemporary sense of community woven by this linkage. This is what he would like to be the case; but it is

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not the case. To gloss over this important point is to miss one of the most unique and tragic features of the black experience in the New World. Blacks do not have a sense of the past. All that exists is a need—and the articulation of this need on the part of black intellectuals—to have a sense of the past. It is primarily for this reason that the study of Black History has acquired such considerable significance among Blacks today. But History is no substitute for history. To know the facts of one's past is not to be a part of that past. One is only a part of one's past when one inherits a tradition in which being a part of the past has always been a part of the past.

The black man of the New World lost his sense of the past when he was torn from the soil of Africa. He lost it as he lost the cult of the dead, the myths, the beliefs, the whole fabric of life which sustained him up to that fateful point when the middle passage began.

But, ironically, in recognizing this fact, we have come upon another basis of unity among New World Blacks: the terrible experience of a shared lacuna. The black man in the New World is unique among all men in not having a sense of the historic. A terrible wall of silence stands between him and his history. Of course, I am not saying that he is without a past in the literal sense of this term. Such a statement would be an absurdity, since everything has a past. What I am saying is that his past has no meaning for the present. The Blacks of the diaspora sit on the surface of time like deaf men staring vacantly down at the orchestral pit of a great, deep hall. They have learned (no doubt from their intellectuals) that the music of their past has been performed. Perhaps they might even be able to read the score. But between the past and the present, the performers and the onlookers, the living and the dead, there can be no concert. Nor will there ever be one.

Is there a legacy of slavery?

If this is so, does it mean that the study of the black past is of purely academic interest? Not quite. If the past is largely meaningless symbolically, it can nonetheless remain significant sociologically, to the extent that the past experience of the Blacks explains their present position. There can be little doubt that, in specific black communities, the past is of overwhelming significance in explaining the nature of present social organization. However, our concern at the moment is not with the specific experiences per se, but with the extent to which the common historical experiences of the Blacks of the diaspora account at present for shared qualities among them.

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In other words, is there, as is so often claimed, a legacy of slavery among all New World Blacks?

The assumption of such a legacy is found in almost every work that has been written on New World Blacks, yet it has never been shown to be valid. There is no a priori necessity that, because a people has experienced slavery, they will all share a legacy of slavery. Indeed, a close examination of the facts indicates that this assumption is often, if not always, false. For example, sociologists and anthropologists who have studied the black lower-class family in the Caribbean have all claimed that the modern unstable matrifocal family unit found in many segments of these populations—especially on the plantations and in the urban shanty-town belts—is a direct legacy of slavery, reinforced by modern socio-economic factors. Yet my own recent study of lower-class familial patterns in Jamaica clearly indicates that, in spite of striking formal correspondences, there is no logical or substantive link between the modern situation and that which existed in the past; that indeed there was a clear break with the slave tradition in the peasant subculture, and that the modern crisis is entirely the creation of modern socio-economic factors. I suspect that the same may well be true for the Negro lower-class family in the United States. It is highly questionable whether there is any continuity between the patterns of life in today's ghetto and on Southern plantations of the last century—in spite of an almost universal assumption that there is such a link.

Even if it were true that there were continuities between the epoch of slavery and the present, there is no reason to believe that the slave tradition developed and was adapted in the same way to the highly varied conditions under which Blacks now live. I won't go so far as to say that there are no elements of the slave experience which would justify speaking of a shared experience of the legacy of slavery; however, I know of few such cases. We must conclude, therefore, that while certain critical features of the slave experience were shared by all who suffered it, this experience has little relevance for the present, either as a collectively shared memory binding all the black peoples of the Americas, or as a socio-historical continuity shared by them all. Of course, this is not to deny the relevance of this experience in the development of specific black communities.

Remnants of African culture

There is, however, one important area of the black past which does have meaning for black communities throughout the Americas

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today. This concerns the survivals of the African cultures from which the slaves came. These fragments, reinterpretations, remnants, syncretisms of the half-remembered, disintegrated African cultural past survive today in varying degrees throughout the New World, and until recently constituted the most important shared features of black life.

If we were to rank all of the black communities in the New World in terms of the degree of survival within them of African cultural fragments, at the top of the list, we might find some community such as the Bush Negroes of Surinam, while the Blacks of the United States would undoubtedly come out at the bottom. The easiest way, then, of isolating the least common denominators of African culture shared by all New World black peoples is simply to examine the United States black community. True, Herskovits, in his well-known work on the subject, tried to make the case for a considerable number of such survivals in black American culture. His conclusions, however, have never been taken seriously by students of Afro-American life. It is both ironical and unfortunate that today, long after his conclusions have been rejected by serious scholars, they should now have been revived by black nationalists and pseudo-intellectuals of the black movement who are only too willing to accept at face value Herskovits' quite untenable views on this question.

Briefly, those least common denominators of African culture shared by all Blacks in the Americas are to be found mainly in the evaluative and expressive components of their culture. In traditional African societies, high value was placed on certain central institutions, such as religion, kinship, the rituals associated with death, dance, song, and folklore. Throughout the New World, these high valuations continued to survive, although the content of the institutions so valued changed radically. Thus, one may see the relatively high value still placed on religion by black Americans as an African survival—though not, of course, their actual religious practices and beliefs, which are either wholly Christian or peculiarly black American. Similarly, the emphasis on death and the ritual of death is a survival of an African valuation, one found among Blacks throughout the New World—although, here again, the content of these rituals varies from one part of the New World to the next. Some communities retain bits and pieces of aboriginal African ritual, especially in Brazil and the West Indies; elsewhere such rituals are wholly European in nature. Blacks throughout the New World also seem to value the spoken word in a special way that can reasonably be described as characteristically African. There is an intensely oral quality in the

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communicative patterns of the Blacks of the Americas, a love of talk or "rapping" for its own sake which, while undoubtedly shared with other groups, is distinctive in its emphasis and social import among Blacks. Blacks throughout the New World, far more than other groups, also typically place a high value upon dance and music and song. For the average Black person music has a social and emotional significance which strikes more deeply at the heart of a wider area of life.

In addition to the common retention of these valuations, a case can be made for certain common substantive survivals in some of the institutions and life styles of Blacks throughout the Americas. Thus, all over the Americas, black music and dance has certain underlying shared qualities which clearly indicate an African origin, even where the forms differ as widely as the blues, the calypso, the samba, and the Jamaican reggae. Lomax has argued fairly convincingly that, as far as the folk song is concerned, all black music in the Americas must be seen as part of a common cultural pattern with West African music.

More controversial is the view that black dialects or creole languages throughout the Americas share certain common linguistic features. There is certainly no doubt on this matter concerning the creole languages in the Caribbean and South America; the problem really is whether there are any linguistic least common denominators which black American speech shares with these creole languages. Certainly in a few isolated black communities, such as the Gulla of the sea islands and Louisiana, there are certain linguistic features which are shared with other black communities in the New World; but for the mass of black Americans, and especially urban Blacks, it is doubtful whether their speech patterns still retain any significant linguistic continuity with Africa.

Finally, black folklore, insofar as it remains a constituent element of black life, may be seen as another important least common denominator. The trickster-hero cycle of tales found in West Africa survives throughout the New World, the only remnant of the African folkloristic tradition to do so. It survived, first, because it was functionally most adaptable—both psychologically and socially—to the needs of plantation and rural life in the post-emancipation New World. A folk cycle in which a small animal—a rabbit, spider, or tortoise—survives by outwitting the larger animals of his world obviously has high survival potential in any condition of oppression. It seems, however, that the moral significance of these tales changed radically in the New World. In the West African versions, the trick-

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ster-hero nearly always outsmarts himself by his trickery; it is he who is the buffoon, and the moral of the tale invariably preaches the evils of trickery, dishonesty, and cunning. But in almost all New World black communities, trickery and cunning became virtues to be admired and inculcated, not evils to be admonished. Thus, we find throughout the New World a dramatic ethical transformation in which the trickster-hero wins out in the end, and his adversaries, however outrageously tricked or however dishonestly outwitted, nonetheless remain the butt of the tale's humor.

To sum up, then, we find that in the evaluative and expressive areas of their culture, Blacks throughout the New World, in a limited way, share certain common remnants of the aboriginal West African cultures. At the same time, however, we must point out that these remnants constitute only a small segment of the total culture of any black community in the New World; and, more important, *it is precisely these cultural features which have been the first to disappear as a result of modern developments among Blacks in the New World.*

"Soul"

There is another way in which the black communities of the New World may be said to possess a certain underlying unity. This is, quite simply, in their growing commitment to the idea of unity. A strong case may be made for this view on the grounds that merely thinking themselves to be a group is enough to make a people a group. A significant element of all group identity and cohesiveness is what may be called the will to community. People often make groups by willing them; the content—norms, values and beliefs—then evolves afterwards as a result of continued mutual association. In the beginning, all that is necessary is the will to exist, reinforced by what may be called the myth of cultural unity. Thus, if Blacks believe themselves to be a single group, as they increasingly do, and if a myth of cultural unity exists, as it certainly does, then in one important sense a basis of group identity has been forged. Of course, here the myth of cultural unity is not entirely a myth, as was recognized in our earlier enumeration of the least common denominators of black culture in the Americas; these elements, however, are now important mainly in the role of sustaining the growing myth of cultural cohesiveness. They constitute the core of truth which gives some weight and support to the claims of unity made by intellectuals and leaders in black communities throughout the New World.

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The myth of black cultural unity has a focal concept which has been growing in intensity ever since the 1920's: This is the concept of black "soul"—the view that Blacks, by the simple fact of being black, possess a certain quality of being, a certain way of relating to the world and to living, which either defies explanation or is something that only Blacks can be expected to understand. In its most sophisticated form, the concept of "soul" expands into a form of racial mysticism, best exemplified by the West Indian literary movement known as "Negritude" and by certain artists and writers of the Harlem Renaissance. But whatever form it takes, it is a notion that has rapidly caught on among the Blacks of the Americas, and it informs the growing self-awareness of these groups that they are part of a single and distinctive people.

III

So far, we have been looking at black life in the Americas in a fairly static way, isolating those features which Blacks share, or those more important areas in which they differ from each other. At this point, I want to examine the situation dynamically, concentrating on certain common trends in the black community. These are more marked in some areas, especially the United States, than in others, such as Latin America; but even in the most backward areas, the signs are clear that certain developments are inevitable. These trends are similar because of a growing convergence of certain determining structural factors in the environment of all New World Blacks. Blacks, in short, have most in common in their future, in their largely predictable fate.

These converging trends are emerging on two levels—the intranational and the international. I shall begin by examining these processes intranationally in the light of the U.S. black experience, since this case presents the most advanced stage of the unfolding patterns which I hope to examine, and, as such, offers an image of the future of other black communities in the New World. I shall then examine these other black communities, showing parallel developments, or the early indicators of such developments.

Migration to the North

Seen dynamically, the U.S. black community during the present century has developed in three stages, each an immediate response to certain critical changes in the structural bases of black life in the

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United States. The first stage began with the tremendous increase in the demand for labor during and immediately after the First World War, accompanied by the temporary collapse of Southern agriculture occasioned by the boll weavil epidemic and a succession of poor crops. This stimulated the first major movement of Blacks from the rural South to the industrial North. For Blacks, the critical fact during this time was the simple act of migration. A migrant, of necessity, is always a more socially and personally conscious individual. In his classic work on the migration of European peasants to the United States, Oscar Handlin writes: "Immigration has transformed the entire economic world within which the peasants had formerly lived. From surface forms to innermost functionings, the change was complete—a new setting, new activities, and new meanings forced the newcomers into radically new roles as producers and consumers of goods." In this respect, the experience of the Southern black migrant coming to the North was identical with that of the white peasant coming from Europe; but in all other respects the experiences and responses differed radically. For the Southern Black was still less than a full generation from the horrors of slavery. His was not an uprooting since no roots had been possible in the Southern wilderness from which he fled; his migration was not induced by the pull and hope of a better life, but largely by the push of the chain-gang, the lynch mob, and the boll weavil. And however harsh and agonizing was the experience of the European migrant, however tragic the individual agonies of a world lost and of families broken, the white migrant could still hope, still nourish his dreams. The world he met, if chaotic and strange, was nonetheless ultimately sympathetic, a world which, if not he, at least his children could hope to master. Thus, the white peasant migrant could react conservatively to his new setting, both because he had the essential ingredients of a religious and cultural tradition which he could fall back upon, and because a conservative posture best suited his own emotional and social ends.

Not so the black migrant. For him, too, an ordered pattern of life had been lost, but it had been the order of tyranny. The world he now found was a lonely and strange one also, but to loneliness and racial isolation he was no stranger; and after the sustained horror of the familiar, anything strange was welcome. The critical element in the early Northern migration of the Blacks was their breaking away from the crippling impotence of the plantation and the sharecropping farms and small towns of the South. The South had disabled not just the body but the soul; a race lived together but did not

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—could not—know itself. The South had developed socially and culturally mediated techniques of thought control and surveillance to too fine a degree for any kind of black racial solidarity to take place. This ruthlessly efficient police state did not need a specialized policing agency, for every poor white person had a vested emotional and social interest in setting himself up as a policeman; nor did it need a specialized agency of propaganda and thought control, since the assumption of racial superiority was instilled in every white citizen and expressed in every inter-racial contact.

In the North of the 1920's, however, the Blacks found a world still unsophisticated in the techniques of racial exploitation, even if it had already lost its racial innocence—a world as yet untroubled by the urban problem, too busy with its own wars and later its own prosperity to worry over a straggling band of strange-looking rustics. Thus, for the first time, the black American found it possible to look inward upon himself; this had never been possible in the South, where the daily task of sheer survival overwhelmed all of his psychic and social energies. For individual and group introspection to take place, a breather from the daily struggle to survive was necessary, and such a breather—meager, grudging, hard won, but a breather nonetheless—the North offered.

The culmination of this racial introspection had two dimensions: On the bourgeois level, it resulted in the first stirrings of organized racial protest, the appeal to white morality and law, and pacific demands for integration, equal rights, and full participation in the total fabric of the society. On the level of the newly emerged urban masses, however, such demands were meaningless. From the very earliest stage, the black urban masses had an instinctive grasp of the situation which made them highly skeptical of any possibility of integration in the society as it then existed. Rejecting integration, they had only two alternatives: a revolutionary attempt to change the system or a withdrawal from it. At that time it was clear to all that the first alternative was suicidal. Instead, the newly emerged urban lower classes chose a strategy well-trodden by similarly oppressed groups during their first phase of mass mobilization and political awareness—the pursuit of the millennium. In the United States, a somewhat secularized form of Black millenarianism crystalized into the Marcus Garvey movement, with its view of Africa as the promised land, and its goal of mass emigration back to the lost continent.

Although the paths chosen by the bourgeois intellectuals and the urban masses were different, their achievements were ultimately

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similar. Neither group made any significant dent in the social order; neither attained any significant gains for its members, and each was as unrealistic as the other. What both did achieve was a heightened racial consciousness as an oppressed group and a sense of outrage at their situation. Without further underlying structural changes in the black community, however, nothing further could have been achieved.

Urbanization and the ghetto

The second stage in modern black history came about with the temporary collapse of the capitalist economy in the United States during the 1930's. The total depression in the South, which was the region hardest hit in many respects, jolted even the most apathetic Southern rural Blacks, and right after the depression they began anew on a massive scale the migration to the Northern cities. What was originally only a stream now became a flood. Within a matter of years, the entire demographic structure of the black population changed from predominantly rural to irrevocably urban. Thus, in 1910, only 27.4 per cent of the black population was urban (compared with a white figure of 48.7 per cent). In 1920, the proportion had moved to 30 per cent (compared to 53.4 per cent for Whites); by 1930, it had reached 43.7 per cent; by 1950, 62.4 per cent; and by 1960, fully 73.2 per cent of the black population was urban, now well ahead of the white population, whose urban segment had climbed at a much slower rate to 65.5 per cent. This startling demographic change, originally stimulated by economic forces, had now acquired a momentum of its own; by the 1980's, the black population should be almost entirely urban. The result has been the urban ghetto, with all its familiar horrors.

The urbanization and ghetto-ization of the Blacks was a movement which U.S. society could not continue to neglect, but at the same time, it was a movement that the society could not absorb or resolve. The singular tragedy of the black man's massive flight to the cities is that he arrived there at a time when the economy of the United States had grown to the stage where it no longer had much use for a large *lumpenproletariat*. Ghetto-ization was a consequence of growing economic redundancy; what is worse, it contributed to a vicious circle. Already functionally irrelevant to an economic system heading towards its post-industrial phase, the Blacks found themselves segregated into slums which were ideal environments for the creation of a race of socially and occupation-

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ally incapacitated "lumpen", thus further reinforcing their irrelevance. It is at this point that awareness turned to anger, hate, and rage. The era of the urban riots began.

The Negro middle classes, which, until this time, had remained fairly clear of the urban masses, now found it in their best interests to identify with them. Why? Simply because the response of the power structure to the urban crisis made such an identification necessary for their own economic and social interests. All that the system could offer were doomed reformist measures and palliatives —the endless plans and projects of the "Great Society" and the "War on Poverty." But, as has now become patently clear, the only group to benefit from all this is the army of middle-class bureaucrats and the lower-class hustlers who man these spurious programs, and those middle-class Blacks who are co-opted into elite roles for mainly cosmetic purposes: the powerless new vice-presidents for community affairs in the business sector, the consultants and junior executives in the public sector, and the professors of Afro-American studies in the academic sector. In the meantime, of course, the situation in the ghettos grows worse. The middle classes and the rest of the leadership, as racial middle men, now have a vested interest in the anger of the masses—the louder the masses scream and the more cities they burn, the higher the salaries and the greater the number of special token jobs created for the middle men.

The culture of poverty

It is at this point that the third stage in the unfolding of the black community takes place. All remedial action having failed to halt the growing restlessness and anger of the black masses, white capital and its supporters now flee to the suburbs, leaving the empty husk of the inner cities to the turbulent black "lumpen" and their impotent leaders. This stage has just begun, of course; here and there the urban Whites are putting up a last ditch stand to save the central cities, but it is only a matter of time before they all leave. For black violence has taken a new turn. Gone now are the epic riots which at least had some meaning and reflected a certain hope, even in their flames, since they were at least spontaneous group expressions of outrage at clearly recognizable deprivations. The mood of violence has shifted from the collective to the individual level, from the socially understandable to the level of private criminality. As the screws of the vicious circle of the ghetto tighten, as hope dies, a new mood emerges. It is every man for himself. Each seeks his sal-

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vation where he can find it, when he can get it, and by whatever means. Anger, hate, outrage, and violence have lost their organic integration, have now, in Durkheimian terms, become mechanical. The integration of the black masses lies in the sameness of each individual's despair, not in their interdependence. The growing proletarianization and ghetto-ization of the group leads to its increasing homogenization, and its increasing homogenization leads to its increasing atomization. From the misery, sameness, and atomization of the slave plantation, the Blacks of the ghettos are coming full circle to the misery, sameness, and atomization of the urban slums. There are, however, three critical structural differences in the present situation: First, the society is now a post-industrial one, not an agricultural society; second, the Blacks are economically irrelevant to this new society; and third, there is now a black leadership class.

To further protect their own interests, these black leaders now reinforce the theme of racial pride and dignity which, of course, is perfectly unobjectionable even to the most conservative of Whites. And, at the same time, they seek to identify in life style with the black masses. Thus, instead of interpreting the ghetto as a corrupting influence, black leadership has perversely set about condemning sociologists and all others who attempt to delineate the circle of pathology in the slums; instead, they not only idealize this life style but attempt to proletarianize themselves, to think and talk and act "black." Black culture in the United States, then, is rapidly losing its diversity; regional differences are lost in the growing sameness of the urban ghetto, and class differences disappear in the desperate self-proletarianization of the middle-class leadership. The latter process is further reinforced by the fact that, in recent years, the leadership of the black community has increasingly come from the ghettos, and, as such, is lower-class in origin.

In all this, there is yet another striking irony: A closer examination of the urban lower class reveals that there is no longer anything ethnic about its culture. Its institutions almost all stem from the imperatives of urban poverty. The "black family," "black speech," "black life styles," are in no way distinctively black, but are simply lower-class. To the extent that the middle class and those who are potentially upward-mobile identify with the masses, to that extent they proletarianize themselves. Thus, at the very point where Blacks in the United States approach a kind of cultural identity, they cease to be black in any meaningful cultural sense of that term. The culture of poverty, which *is* a poverty of culture, is fast becoming the lot of all black Americans, whether through necessity or by choice;

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black culture increasingly is "black" only in name. In sharing, at last, a common way of life on a level of self-awareness, black Americans cease to share a peculiarly black way of life. This development, of course, is still to be fully realized. There remain vestiges of ethnicity in the black community, but such qualities seem fated to disappear soon. The trend is strong and seemingly irreversible.

Parallel developments in the Caribbean

What is rapidly unfolding in the United States is also emerging among the black people in the rest of the Americas. Both in the Caribbean and Latin America, with the latter lagging by a few decades for reasons discussed earlier, black populations are moving in huge numbers and at ever growing rates to the urban slums and shanties. As in the United States, this urban shift has been stimulated in the first place by basic economic changes—in the case of the Caribbean, the economic dislocations created by the Depression and the Second World War, and the collapse of the imperial economic system.

In the Caribbean also, this first stage was marked by growing racial consciousness, reflected particularly in riots on the plantations and in urban areas during the late 1930's and early 1940's. Since Blacks constitute the majority in West Indian societies, the middle classes, who had formerly remained aloof, were able to transform this early racial awakening into a form of national consciousness. The imperial masters responded with a package of reforms, beginning with social welfare schemes and adult suffrage, and culminating in political independence. However, the only group to have gained substantially from these reforms was the newly emerged and established middle classes.

Within recent years, the accumulated impact of soil erosion, rural overpopulation, and the false attraction of the city (partly attributable to the pitiable attempts at modernization by the new elite) has led to a massive flight of the peasant population to the major cities of the region. As the U.S. Blacks had fled the rural South, so now the peasant masses of the Caribbean flee the barren rural hills and plantations. What in America became the Northern ghettos are, in the Caribbean and in Latin America, the shanty towns and *favelas* of the coastal cities. In the Caribbean, the trend was halted temporarily when a new outlet for rural migrants was found in the cities of Britain, where black ghettos such as Brixton quickly emerged. In 1962, however, the British government put an end to this immi-

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gration. Thus, the cities of the Caribbean once again have had to absorb the full impact of the migration of the rural and lower classes.

The relentless push to the cities has now attained the same critical level which the black American migration reached during and after the War years. Although they are all still poor, there are already several Caribbean societies which are more urban than rural. Within the next two decades, almost all the major societies of the region will be overwhelmingly urban, at a time when the prospect of any breakthrough in terms of industrialization still seems remote. For the newly emerged bourgeois nationalist elite, the urban drift has not only created vast, insoluble social and economic problems, but has threatened to topple the regimes they now control.

The second stage has already arrived in several of the larger islands of the Caribbean. In places such as Trinidad and Jamaica, all the well-known problems of rising expectations, social and economic frustrations, urban poverty, racial and class tensions are rapidly converging and building up to a major structural crisis.

What in the United States is a minority problem is here a national problem. The black and light-skinned elite has responded with neo-colonial economic strategies. Foreign investors are enticed by tax holidays, market concessions, monopoly rights, and the whole package of "incentives" and national auctioning which West Indian economists refer to disdainfully as "development by invitation." These plans of development, of course, have all failed, as they failed even in Puerto Rico and Ireland, with their far more favorable conditions of growth. The black bourgeois elite, caught between the unrest of its growing urban masses and the sensitivity and edginess of its foreign investors, has responded with a curious form of cultural nationalism—on the one hand, appealing to the nonexistent national pride of the masses, and, on the other hand, projecting an image of racial and political stability to foreign investors. The favorite way of characterizing this precarious ideology is by the motto, "Out of many, one people." But of course, no one believes this any more. Not the restless, dispossessed, urbanized semi-peasants who recently rioted in Trinidad and are constantly on the point of violence in Jamaica; not the wary foreign capitalists who are pulling out or refusing to accept the generous invitations and conditions of the area's development boards; and certainly not the black or light-skinned elite itself, which nervously barricades itself in iron-grilled suburban homes.

Political independence and the attempts at modernization have certainly changed the Caribbean, but far from improving conditions,

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they have succeeded only in urbanizing and proletarianizing the mass of the population. As a result, the same socio-cultural consequences are in the process of unfolding as in the United States. The urban poor of the shanties are becoming increasingly homogenized and atomized; not only are insular differences breaking down in the slums of the different islands, but the Blacks of the growing urban belts of the Caribbean are increasingly acquiring the same socio-cultural patterns as the urban Blacks of the United States. Poverty is no respecter of national boundaries. The remnants of Afro-Caribbean culture are giving way to the culture of poverty, with all its deadening sameness. The family collapses; the personal dignity of the peasant disappears, and it is replaced by the fatalism and aggressiveness of the urban masses. The hustler replaces the shrewd farmer; unemployment becomes a way of life; crime and delinquency run rampant. It is Harlem and Roxbury and Newark all over again; only here the trend is a national one, and the setting a tropical "paradise."

The stage of economic irrelevance

It might be contended that because Blacks in the West Indies constitute whole nations, the problem must somehow be different. It used to be, as we have already argued, and in many respects it still is. But the relevant differences are diminishing in significance, for the signs are that the islands, especially the larger ones, are rapidly moving towards the third stage in the process I have outlined—the stage of economic irrelevance.

What is true of the black American minority on the intranational level is increasingly becoming true of these island societies on the international level. As the Western economies in which they developed move towards their post-imperial phase, the island economies—due to their small size, their lack of resources, the hopeless terms of trade under which they have to operate, the neo-colonial nature of their plans of development, and their complete domination by the United States, Canada, and the former colonial powers—have simply ceased to be viable and are hopelessly uncompetitive in the community of nations. As black labor in the United States was once highly relevant to an important segment of the country's economy, so the West Indian economies, based on the labor of the black slaves, were once all-important to the imperialist economies of Europe. It is a fact that two centuries ago France was prepared to give up the whole of Canada for one tiny island (Martinique) in the Caribbean.

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Indeed, it has been argued that the industrial development of Britain was made possible largely by the capital accumulated from profits on the West Indian trade—from the "black cargoes" of the slave trade and the "brown gold" of sugar produced on the slave plantations. But in the highly automated and competitive post-imperial world of today, the labor of the unskilled black masses of the Caribbean has become irrelevant. Even the United States now produces sugar—for centuries considered the "natural" product of the West Indies—cheaper than they do in the islands.

Finally, one finds early signs of the third stage in the beginnings of a flight of imperial capital, accompanied by ever growing frustrations, violence, and repression. Interestingly, there are early signs, too, of the emergence of a new counter-elite—either from among the younger generation of the old non-white elite or from among the more literate section of the urban masses—who not only challenge the rule of the present nationalist leaders, but idealize and romanticize the way of life of the urban masses and interpret this way of life in black nationalist terms. In other words, there is the same confusion of lower-class culture with black culture. What is more, the diffusion of U.S. black power ideology through the powerful U.S. international media network has created an extraneous cultural reinforcement of this self-proletarianization process on the part of the new counter-elite. By seizing upon the self-deceptive fantasies of black nationalism, American style, the young, frustrated potential leaders of the Caribbean have already carried their own process of proletarianization to a stage well beyond what would have naturally evolved at this point. In this respect too, history has come full circle. We have already seen how, at an earlier period, the racial consciousness of the black American masses was initiated by a West Indian, Marcus Garvey. The West Indian peasant, with his greater sense of racial and personal dignity, when placed in the setting of the emerging American ghetto, naturally responded with a greater sense of outrage and was in a better position at that time to assume leadership of the U.S. black masses. Today, as their condition approaches that of the U.S. ghetto, albeit on a national scale, the dispossessed peasants and lower classes of the shanties in the Caribbean rely upon the ideological leadership of the black Americans.

The fate of New World Blacks

To summarize then, the entire black population of the Americas is growing alike in its urban poverty, its "lumpenization," and its ghetto

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environment; in the decline of its specific cultural heritage and in the emergence of a universal culture of poverty; and in the desperate proletarianization and self-deceptive black power ideology of its increasingly reckless and helpless leaders. If this interpretation is correct, we must conclude that the fate of the Blacks in the Americas is, indeed, bleak. The chances of their disappearance are not remote. The dismal alternatives confronting them seem to be a quick, violent death brought about by a suicidal attempt at revolt, or a prolonged death through redundancy and attrition. The only way in which this awful fate can be avoided is by both a radical reordering of American priorities and an equally radical change in the philosophical and cultural orientation of black Americans and their leaders.

Black American leadership must immediately recognize what is rapidly becoming an accomplished fact—that the black masses no longer form an ethnic group but a redundant *lumpenproletariat.* It must cease to interpret the situation in racial terms and must begin to take account of the underlying class realities. Having made this recognition, black leadership must then take the initiative in bringing about a change in American domestic and foreign policies. The only way it can succeed in doing this is by de-ethnicating and acting in concert with its natural class allies—those poor Whites, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and downwardly mobile Latins who not long from now will also face the humiliation of post-industrial redundancy. The de-ethnication of American society is an awesome, seemingly impossible task; hence our pessimism. But it is the only way out; and it is not just the fate of black Americans that depends upon it, but that of millions of Blacks in the Caribbean and Latin America as well. An America with changed domestic priorities is almost certainly an America with changed international priorities; the former, indeed, is the *sine qua non* of the latter. The Caribbean ex-colonies are incapable of transforming themselves whatever the nature of their leadership—whether bourgeois nationalist, black power nationalist, or Castroite socialist. Black Americans, as the most significant body of black people in the Americas and as the group nearest to the center of both hemispheric and world power, must act, not only in their own interests, but in the interests of fellow Blacks throughout the hemisphere.

Beyond "Blackness"

Bleak though the situation is, it also presents an awesome opportunity. The Blacks of the Americas now face a historic choice. To

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survive, they must abandon their search for a past, must indeed recognize that they lack all claims to a distinctive cultural heritage, and that the path ahead lies not in myth making and in historical reconstruction, which are always doomed to failure, but in accepting the epic challenge of their reality. Black Americans can be the first group in the history of mankind who transcend the confines and grip of a cultural heritage, and in so doing, they can become the most truly modern of all peoples—a people who feel no need for a nation, a past, or a particularistic culture, but whose style of life will be a rational and continually changing adaptation to the exigencies of survival, at the highest possible level of existence.

The great irony, of course, is that, should Blacks succeed in doing this, they will indeed make themselves unique. In a world where every group still strives to be unique, to preserve its past, and to hold sacred the principle of continuity, a group which discards uniqueness and spurns tradition will by that very fact become unique in a truly revolutionary way. For it is clear that the next great cultural advance of mankind will involve the rejection of tradition and of particularism.

I do not think that I am the first person to have this vision of what is at once the black race's only path to survival and the possible basis of its future distinction. For it seems to me that this is precisely the message of Cesaire's great poem, "Cahier d'un Retour au Pays Natal." Most critics have failed to recognize the ultimate thrust of the poem's dialectic. Cesaire rejects white civilization because of its inherent parochialism and racism by retreating into a mythical black "essence," a symbolic Africa of the soul—his "negritude." But he does not end here, as most black critics seem to think; for "Blackness," having served its purpose, also is finally rejected for the same reason that white culture—indeed all parochial culture—is rejected. In transcending his "Blackness," the black man of the New World distinguishes himself by creating a new New World; and he is able to do this precisely because he is among "ceux qui n'ont jamais rien inventé." We can now understand the true import of the poem's most celebrated and, I contend, most misunderstood lines:

Eia pour ceux qui n'ont jamais rien inventé
pour ceux qui n'ont jamais rien exploré
pour ceux qui n'ont jamais rien dompté

mais ils s'abandonnent, saisis, à l'essence de toute chose
ignorants des surfaces mais saisis par le mouvement
de toute chose
insoucieux de dompter, mais jouant le jeu du monde

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véritablement les fils aînés du monde
poreux à tous les souffles du monde
aire fraternelle de tous les souffles du monde
lit sans drain de toutes les eaux du monde
étincelle du feu sacré du monde
chair de la chair du monde palpitant du mouvement même du monde!

(Hurrah for those who have never invented anything
for those who have never explored anything
for those who have never tamed anything

but they give themselves up, entranced, to the essence of all things
ignorant of surfaces, but gripped by the movement of all things
not caring to tame, but playing the game of the world

truly the elder sons of the earth
open to all the breaths of the world
brotherly space for the breaths of the world
river-bed without drainage for all the waters of the world
spark of the sacred fire of the world
flesh of the flesh of the world alive with the movement
of the world!)[1]

It may be objected that this is too monumental a task for any group to take on, especially one as disadvantaged as the Blacks of the New World diaspora. My reply to this is twofold: First, we might as well take on the task, since we have already made the major sacrifice necessary for its performance—the loss of our history. Second, we might as well try to do it, for otherwise we are lost.

[1] Translated by G. R. Coulthard in *Race and Color in Caribbean Literature* (Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 59).

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The riddle of inflation —a new answer

JAMES W. KUHN

INFLATION will not be stopped, many economic commentators assert, until large corporations and big unions quit pushing up wages and prices. This conventional, Galbraithian explanation assumes that, in an economy at or near full employment, corporate managers encounter little resistance to price rises. Enabled to pass on higher costs, they do not balk at ever larger wage demands made by unionists who seek to outpace the price changes. Thus, the upward spiral of administered prices and negotiated wages generates inflation in the modern industrial state.

The obvious remedy appears to be regulation of the wages and prices of those creating the problem. If public authorities monitor the prices of large corporations and set limits on the wage settlements of industrial unions, inflation can be cured, we are told. Conservatives hope the regulating will be limited in scope and time, while liberals expect it be a more or less permanent feature of American life. Both agree, however, that it is the large corporations and big unions, those which occupy "the commanding heights" of capitalism, that are responsible for perpetuating the inflation and therefore must be subject to control.

The recent bout of inflation in the United States has been the worst since the War period (1940-46), when the consumer price in-

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dex rose 39 per cent. Since 1965, the index has gone up 30 per cent. Even after President Nixon took office and moved to slow down the economy, prices continued to rise. Since February 1969, they have risen over 14 per cent, indicating that inflation had not slackened, up to the price freeze in August 1971; it had accelerated, even as the unemployment rate jumped sharply from 3.3 to 6.1 per cent at the time of the freeze. The classic game plan of stopping an inflation by slowing the economy had not worked well. At least it was working too slowly for a president who had to stand for reelection within a year. Dr. Arthur Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, ruefully admitted that the old rules did not seem to hold anymore.

What wages have gone up?

The American economy has changed so rapidly over the last decade—indeed, over the last six years—that Dr. Burns and other Administration economists who followed the old economic rules of controlling inflation by monetary policy were sure to be taken unawares; so swiftly have changes come, in fact, that even Professor Galbraith must be surprised. Galbraith's newer rules of wage and price controls may not be better guides to economic policy-making than those followed by the President in the first two and one-half years of his term.

If inflation is fueled by ever increasing wages negotiated by powerful industrial unions, it is in the industrial, corporate sector that we might expect to see wages rise the most. Professor Galbraith, for example, recently indicated that in the present inflation wages of government workers and service employees—such as doctors, nurses, private teachers, house repairmen, dry cleaners, and barbers—at best "keep more or less abreast"[1] of those demanded and won by unionized industrial workers.

In the most recent edition of *The New Industrial State* (1971), he was not even willing to admit that they might keep up. Rather, he wrote, "There are many categories of income recipients—municipal employees, hospital and library and like workers, pensioners of all kinds—whose incomes do not rise appreciably." While such a statement may have been correct in the 1950's, it has little validity in the 1960's and 1970's. The wages of government, service, and trade employees have risen considerably—*more* than enough to stay abreast

[1] "Galbraith Gives Nixon an A-Minus," *Business Week,* October 16, 1971, pp. 74-75.

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of industrial workers' wage increases. From 1965 to the second quarter of 1971, the earnings of federal government workers increased 51 per cent! During that period service workers' earnings rose 43 per cent and earnings of workers in wholesale and retail trade increased 41 per cent. In contrast, the average hourly earnings of workers employed in manufacturing and transportation—the corporate, unionized sectors of the economy—went up 37 and 35 per cent respectively.

"Catching ahead"

Comparable data for earnings of state and local government employees are not available, but studies by the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that firemen, policemen and public school teachers, among the three largest categories of government workers, have enjoyed far larger wage increases in recent years than those in private industry. Teachers' annual salaries increased almost 43 per cent from 1965-66 to 1970-71, and firefighters and patrolmen saw their salaries rise by 42 to 45 per cent between January 1966 and January 1971. Factory production workers over the same five years received increases in their earnings of only 26 to 33 per cent, depending upon the particular measure used.[2] Since the wage levels of many public employees are as high as or higher than those of private workers in comparable jobs, these increases loom large absolutely as well as relatively. In January 1971 average *minimum* salaries for firemen were $8,513 and for policemen they were $8,898; their *average* yearly salaries, of course, are higher. Elementary and secondary teachers averaged an annual salary of $8,840. In contrast, production workers in manufacturing were earning about $7,200 a year in early 1971, while the higher paid transportation and utility workers were averaging about $8,300 a year. In economic impact the public employees' earnings are the more powerful, insofar as they are accompanied by low productivity gains. If there are few or no offsets to the resulting increase in costs, the full amount of wage increases has to be borne by taxpayers. In the private industrial sector, managers may meet at least some of the costs of wage increases out of productivity gains and pass on only a portion to the consumers. Prices of industrial products thus usually rise at a slower rate than the prices of services.

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[2] Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Wage Developments*, No. 284, September 1971, Table 4, p. 61.

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Pay increases for municipal employees have been so large in recent years that, in most of 11 large cities so far studied, city government workers in clerical, data processing, and maintenance-custodial jobs now hold pay advantages over their counterparts in private industry and the federal government. The advantages are often substantial. Philadelphia pays its clerical employees a third more than the average paid in private industry, and in both Houston and Buffalo clerks' pay is a fifth larger; municipal data processors earn salaries about a fifth larger than those employed by private firms in Philadelphia, Newark, and Los Angeles; and maintenance workers in New York and Newark average 42 per cent larger salaries than those in private industry.[3]

Over the last six years, government workers have received larger wage increases than either factory workers or white-collar employees in private industry. One can hardly explain their gains, or those won by workers in the service and trade industries, as merely attempts to stay abreast, let alone catch up. Wage data indicate that causal relationships more probably ran the other way. *Workers and employees in big industries—manufacturing and transportation particularly—have sought wage increases to meet the soaring cost of living and to help them pay ever higher state and local taxes, both of which were pushed up by the rising prices of services.* Social security taxes paid by the average production worker, for example, more than doubled in 1965-70, offsetting some or all of the federal income tax cuts.

This conclusion, of course, flies in the face of "common knowledge" about the fantastic wage increases unions have been negotiating in recent years. Each new settlement brings headline reports of the highest rates ever sought by unions and the highest ever granted by employers.[4] In 1965, union leaders were negotiating wage packages with annual increases (over the life of contracts) of 3.3 per cent. By 1968 these hovered around six per cent; and by 1970 they were nearly nine per cent. Since union negotiators want to convince their constituents that they have brought home

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[3] Stephen H. Perloff, "Comparing Municipal Salaries With Industry and Federal Pay," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 94 (October 1971), pp. 46-50.

[4] While some unions have undoubtedly secured large enough gains over the last two years to improve their situation, not all workers by any means have won such sizable increases. In any one year, only a portion of the unionized workers negotiate new contracts. In 1970, for example, about a fifth (roughly five million) received raises under newly negotiated contracts, and another fifth received smaller deferred wage increases. Many received no increases at all. The average wage increase in any period, therefore, is much less than those that make the news.

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the bacon, first year raises are usually the highest, and most newsworthy. It was the accelerating increases of these front-loaded settlements that received public attention. We read of four per cent raises in 1965 growing to seven per cent in 1968, and swelling to an average over 14 per cent in the second quarter of 1970 and the third quarter of 1971.

Yet rising taxes and prices have eaten away the gains even *faster* than many workers could secure them. Real spendable weekly earnings for production workers (with three dependents) in manufacturing *were lower* in the second quarter of 1971 than in 1965—$101.87 now compared with $102.41 six years ago. Recent gains in 1971 allowed production workers to register a little improvement in real spendable earnings, though they are still a dollar a week below those of 1965. *Try as they will, industrial unions have not been able to outrace tax and price increases. And rising taxes and prices primarily reflect the great increase in the cost of public and private services, which has been the most important inflationary force in the economy.*

The governmental economy—beyond the industrial state

The American economy is amazingly dynamic; its contours constantly change as new industries emerge and old ones fall behind. No one has ignored the major, long-term shifts such as the decline of farm jobs. At the end of World War II, more than one out of every eight persons in the civilian labor force still worked in agriculture; today fewer than one out of 20 do. In 1956, for the first time in our history white-collar workers outnumbered blue-collar workers, the consequence of a slightly faster rate of growth for the former that can be traced back at least to the turn of the century. Today almost half the employed hold white-collar jobs, and the nation provides a larger share of jobs for professionals and technical personnel alone—one of every seven jobs—than it did for agricultural workers in 1947. Most people are also well aware that far larger numbers of women now work than ever before. Less than a third held jobs in 1947, but today 43 per cent do, with over half of all women working or looking for work at some time during the year.

Along with these massive, slower-moving changes there have been other, more rapid adjustments that tend to catch Americans unaware. One is the reappearance of state and local governments as important centers of public activity after a thirty-year eclipse. Until

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1941, their annual expenditures always surpassed those of the federal government (except in wartime). From World War II on, however, federal expenditures dominated, with continued support of defense contractors and both the Korean and the Vietnam war providing reason to keep them large. But in 1965, for the first time in nearly a generation, state and local expenditures topped those of the federal government—by nearly $3 billion. Heavy war purchasing kept federal buying higher through 1967; but since 1968, state and local governments have increased their purchases of goods and services enormously, while the federal government has actually cut back its expenditures. By 1971, state and local governments were spending nearly 40 per cent more than the federal government ($135 billion to $98 billion).

The federal government has done much to encourage expansive, inflationary state and city programs. Since 1965, grants-in-aid to state and local governments have increased almost two and one-half times, from $11 billion to an estimated $30.3 billion in 1971. Cost-sharing programs, of which there are now 1,089, will require $34.3 billion of federal funds and between $13 and $15 billion in state money for 1972. A sizable portion of these federal funds has been supplied to support educational activities. Total grants for such purposes have nearly tripled, from $3.4 billion in 1965 to $9.6 billion in 1971. The federal government has also helped states and cities improve their police forces, build urban housing, provide health care, and construct roads and highways; it has supplied funds to begin attacks upon pollution and snarls in mass transportation.

City, county, and state payrolls reflect the largesse with which affluent Americans have recently endowed state and local government. Since 1965, employment has increased by a third, adding 2.6 million more workers to the 7.7 million then employed. As a proportion of all wage and salary workers, government employees at all levels now account for over 18 per cent, or almost a fifth. Employment in the service industries has grown almost as much as it has among state and local governments (31 per cent). It now accounts for 17 per cent of all non-farm payroll workers. The number of jobs in finance has also grown rapidly, increasing by 26 per cent in the last six years. The trade sector has added to its employment, showing a 19 per cent increase. Adding up the workers in the non-industrial sectors—government, wholesale-retail trade, finance, and services—gives a total of 62 per cent, not far from two thirds of all non-farm payroll employment.

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On doing good badly

The rapid growth of the services and the swelling payrolls in state and local governments—accompanied, one hopes, by more activity—have caused problems. Complaints of waste and misdirected effort are common. Nevertheless, the changes indicate a responsive society. Racked by dissension, civil disorder, protests, and riots in the 1960's, the nation responded by changing national priorities and programs. Critics continually condemn Americans for ignoring the needs of the disadvantaged and denounce political leaders for moving too slowly to meet the requirements of the dispossessed. The nation and its leaders, however, did take notice of social grievances and did attempt to deal with them. Indeed, legislators approved too quickly the hastily-devised and not-well-thought-out programs of government experts; they appropriated funds faster than they could be effectively or efficiently used to mobilize resources. As a consequence, once the huge deficits for war expenditures of fiscal 1967 and 1968—nearly $19 billion—let loose the inflationary forces, the United States found itself contending with a continuing, growing rise in prices.

Many people are unhappy with the inflation and point out that our new, costly government programs need better structuring and managing as well as careful evaluation. Some argue that the programs have to be cut back, and others that they were ill-conceived from the start and should be ended. Undoubtedly they all can be run better. We need every bit of increased productivity we can secure from every sector of the economy, but especially from government and the service industries.

By every measure and for every period, productivity in the service sector shows itself to be from 30 to 50 per cent below that for the goods sector. The few available measures of government productivity indicate as low or lower a rate. Employment in the Post Office, for example, increased by 22 per cent during 1965-70, while output per manhour crept upward at a rate of only 0.3 per cent a year—one tenth the rate of increase for farms, mines, and factories. State and local governments probably would show as sorry a record if we had the data to reveal it. Unless the service and government sectors begin to offset more of their wage costs by using labor more efficiently, the burden they impose on taxpayers and consumers will become intolerably heavy.

But whatever the problems they now pose for us, it would be wise to remember that the nation approved the new programs and promoted the burgeoning services as answers to acute social prob-

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lems. Those problems remain with us, for most are far from being solved. Legislators may change and adjust, but they hardly can eliminate the programs outright; taxpayers may balk, but they can seldom refuse for long to fund the programs. Society has changed too much over the past six years to go back to where we were in health care, education, and welfare, for example. *In the process of trying to solve our social problems, we have transformed the economy as well as society.*

So swiftly has the economy changed, in less than a decade, that many economists and government policy-makers have failed to note what has happened. They may still imagine the economy as it was in the mid-1950's. Then, the new industrial state, with its core of large corporations and mass unions, employed nearly half of the labor force. The industrial unions and big corporations clearly were setting the pace in wages and prices, benefiting themselves at the expense of consumers, pensioners, and the unorganized. Their days of overweening economic influence were limited, though, by the changing pattern of public demands. The number of manufacturing jobs has increased by only 10 per cent since 1955 and by not even three per cent since 1965.

Americans in large numbers have not only turned to foreign goods rather than to the high-priced, all-too-often badly-assembled cars and television sets of domestic producers; they have also made the individual and collective decision to buy more services, such as schooling, medical care, and vacation trips. The governmental economy has attempted to provide them with what they want, but at a cost of higher prices, for higher wages were needed to attract increasing numbers of persons to the newly opening jobs. The result is a transformed economy, badly explained by older economic theories and poorly served by methods of regulation and control devised in the 1940's and 1950's.

New tools for stabilizing wages and prices

Though they have contrived clumsy and less than effective procedures to reduce inflationary pressures in Phase II of the New Economic Policy, President Nixon's advisers knew that they needed to moderate the price and wage push in more than the industrial, corporate sectors of the economy. They have announced stringent price controls on the 1,300 corporations with sales of $100 million or more. These firms must notify the Price Commission before raising their prices; another 1,100 firms with sales between $50 and $100

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million are to report all price adjustments. These 2,400 companies account for roughly half the nation's sales volume. The other half is shared by about 10 million companies, who are not required to report price changes. They only have to keep adequate records.

The number of companies the Price Commission is expected to watch, with small staff and few enforcement personnel, is large. It is far more than the 750 largest companies whose performance is reported annually by *Fortune*. The regulated companies will be far smaller, for example, than Deltown Foods of Yonkers, New York, with 917 employees or Reading Industries of Fort Lee, New Jersey, with 700 employees. Such companies, far down or below *Fortune's* list of the "Second 500 Industrial Corporations," can hardly be considered by anyone as examples of concentrated economic power.

The Administration has been even more ambitious in its attempts to regulate wage increases. The Pay Board has required the 500 largest collective bargaining units, with 5,000 or more employees, to seek advanced approval of pay raises; the next 4,000 largest units, with from 1,000 to 5,000 workers, must report whatever wage changes they make. Though it has thus sought more or less to control quite small companies, it covers (according to Donald Rumsfeld, director of the Cost-of-Living Council) no more than 17 per cent of the work force. Employees in the other 83 per cent are subject to spot checks by agents of the Internal Revenue Service.

Administration officials have attempted through the Pay Board and Price Commission to regulate wages and prices in more than just the few giant corporations and largest unions, but they must realize that important sectors are left unobserved and unregulated, outside the wide ambit of their direct controls. The President, therefore, appointed a committee on the health services industry to advise the Cost-of-Living Council on ways of applying the wage and price standards in this area, and to enlist voluntary restraint in keeping costs down. The price of health care has been a large—and a rapidly rising—component of the consumer price index, increasing by over 50 per cent since 1965. In mid-December the Price Commission set a goal of cutting in half the 12.9 per cent rate of inflation for hospital care during 1970-71. Physicians' fees had gone up 6.8 per cent in the same period, and overall health costs had climbed 6.7 per cent. Any further price increases exceeding six per cent must now be approved in advance, and doctors cannot raise fees more than 2.5 per cent without special permission.

The inflation in health services began with and has been sustained

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by the extremely rapid push which Congress and HEW gave to the new medical care program for the poor and the aged. In 1965, when medicare and medicaid were initiated, the nation's expenditures for personal health care were $35 billion; three years later, the total had swelled to $50 billion, of which the federal government was providing $10 billion annually. The funds flowed far faster than doctors, hospital staffs, and other medical personnel could adjust. Though many persons benefited from the programs, their purposes were not always well served. The quantity and quality of services for the poor and medically indigent did not match the hopes and promises of the sponsors or administrators. Those with the lowest incomes were rationed out of the market as wages and prices in health services jumped upward in a classic inflationary response. It was a case of too much money chasing too few goods and services, and the federal government itself unintentionally brought about this major contribution to national inflation. Until it controls its spending on health care and improves utilization of medical manpower and facilities, the inflationary force will continue to be felt.

The President has also appointed a committee on state and local government cooperation, with the responsibility to advise the Council and to assist both the Commission and the Board. Its primary duty is to stimulate cooperation among the lesser governmental units to hold down wage increases. With 50 state governments to oversee and over 81,000 local governments to enlist, the committee has more than enough work. If it is unsuccessful in moderating wage increases for state and local employees, who are one out of every seven workers, inflationary pressures will continue. Perhaps the increasing reluctance among voters to approve more taxes for higher government pay, along with rising unemployment among government workers (up about 27 per cent from a year ago), will assist the committee more than any efforts of its own.

Anyone is strong with government support

Within the corporate, unionized sector of the economy, one industry has stood out as a major and continuing source of inflation. In two of the three inflation alerts, the Council of Economic Advisers pointed to construction workers' wages as a special problem. Between 1965 and the second quarter of 1971, they rose 52 per cent, topping even those of federal government employees. Though construction workers account for less than five per cent of all non-

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agricultural employees, their widespread distribution and spectacular wage gains make them a conspicuous, well-publicized group. In only 12 months (1970-71) the rate of compensation for union members in the industry increased by amounts ranging from 10.4 per cent for carpenters to 15.4 per cent for plumbers. In mid-1971, building laborers were receiving $5.36 an hour and bricklayers, $7.79 an hour.[5] Here apparently, is evidence that powerful unions can demand almost any wage increase they want and get it.[6]

There is no doubt that the building trades unions exercise powerful influence over wages and that they have used it to raise rates far above any other industry's. The results do not indicate the source of that power, however. It does not flow primarily from an inherently strong bargaining position vis à vis employers; the political influence of the unions, though, has won extraordinarily powerful government support through the Davis-Bacon Act. Under its provisions all except small government contractors must pay construction workers "the prevailing wage." In practice the Secretary of Labor usually designates the union rate as "prevailing," sometimes over an area of several states. As a consequence, the unions need only secure an increase in a few locations where their control of the labor supply may be firm, or where employers are temporarily caught in a poor bargaining position, and under the law the government extends the wage gain far and wide. The prevailing rate is not always the highest, but the unions can use it as a floor upon which they may build. It is an upwardly flexible, beneficially high minimum wage.

The Act is far reaching, for more than half a hundred other federal laws tie into it, as do similar laws in most of the industrial states. Further, government expenditures finance a large share of all construction in the United States, year after year. Through the 1960's they accounted for roughly a third of the total. Over the last year, 1970-71, federal, state, and local governments have supplied nearly $31 billion for new construction, about one quarter of the nation's total ($122 billion).

In late March 1971, President Nixon established the Construction Industry Stabilization Committee under the adroit chairmanship of Dr. John T. Dunlop of Harvard. The President forced the unions

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[5] Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, *News*, Release 71-437, August 6, 1971, p. 2.

[6] Many building workers, of course, do not benefit as much as the rates indicate. Along with their high rates goes high unemployment. Average yearly income for those exposed to seasonal fluctuations remains modest.

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to accept the Committee by suspending Davis-Bacon for a month. Alarmed and threatened by loss of their main wage support, the unions reluctantly agreed to work with the Committee to moderate wage increases. Had the federal government acted sooner and been more careful in its construction spending, it might have helped hold down the inflationary wage gains in construction much earlier.

Industrial unions do count—but they're overrated

Public attention has focused on the Phase II drama of George Meany's antics and his calculated display of discontent with a Republican President's attempt to control union wages. It has been years since any old-time labor leader has had the spotlight of national publicity shining on him—and it is Mr. Meany's first time. Union leaders all intend to make the most of it. It strengthens the conceit that they represent the working man and protect the laboring class. In fact, they bargain for less than a quarter of the labor force and represent the well-paid, skilled, and semi-skilled industrial workers far better than they serve the working poor and minorities.

The sound and fury of union leaders' battles with the Wage Board, Secretary Connally, and the President do not signify as much as unionists would like the public to believe. Nevertheless, an effective program of wage control will have to regulate the terms of collective bargaining agreements. In their attempts to raise and keep take-home pay above 1965 levels, union members have gotten used to exceedingly large money raises—large by historical standards. If these were allowed to continue while the government checked price increases, the settlements would not merely keep up with the prices of services and with taxes, but would become increasingly powerful inflationary stimulants.

Industrial unions and the large corporations have contributed their fair share to inflation all along. That share is notably smaller today, however, than at the 1955 zenith of industrial union influence. The well-organized goods producers have increasingly had to share their economic influence with the rapidly growing providers of services, as the former's relative portion of employment and contribution to national output has declined. The goods producers' portion of Gross National Product is nine per cent less than in 1955, while the service producers' portion has increased by more than 25 per cent. Thus, any given amount of inflationary force generated by the industrial, corporate sector has less effect upon the total economy today than it had in the recent past.

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Nevertheless, large corporations and industrial unions remain important contributors to inflation. Insofar as productivity gains do not offset the rising costs of labor, and corporate managers continue to pass on their higher costs by charging higher prices, the two parties add to the inflationary pressures generated by the programs that pushed wages and prices upward in the governmental, service, construction, and trade sectors of the economy. In the last 24 to 30 months, wholesale prices of motor vehicles, machinery, metals, and chemicals, for example, have risen very rapidly, catching up with and then helping to sustain, or even increase, the pace of the current inflation.

Will the government put its house in order?

The main battle against inflation will not be won—and it can be lost—if the government attempts to control only union wages of industrial workers and if it tries to hold down merely the prices of big business firms. Success depends, most of all, upon moderating the rapid rise in wages of those sectors most significantly influenced by federal, state, and local government expenditures—government itself, services (chiefly schooling and health), construction, and defense production (if Congress appropriates the added billions the Administration has requested). The regulating boards may achieve this simply by limiting or postponing pay increases; they may also attempt to stimulate increased productivity in these sectors by encouraging better use of the resources involved.

Holding down the wages of government workers may be no easy job. Though state, local, and federal government hiring in 1971 dropped to about half the rate for 1965-70, there are other powerful forces pushing for higher wages. Membership in employee associations, such as the National Education Association, as well as enrollment in regular, recognized unions of government workers, has increased rapidly throughout the 1960's. By 1970, 52 per cent of all federal employees belonged to unions or employee associations, and over 27 per cent of all state and local government employees had joined such organizations. These are sizable portions of the government workforce. By comparison, less than 48 percent of all manufacturing workers and only 24 per cent of non-manufacturing workers currently hold membership in unions and employee associations.

The organized government employees have demonstrated both their willingness and ability to conduct strikes and to bargain

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effectively for improved wages, hours, and conditions of work. The unprecedented strike of the postal workers last year is still fresh in the minds of politicians, and citizens across the country are familiar with strikes, sick-ins, and slowdowns by police, teachers, public hospital attendants, and sanitation workers. Moreover, government employees can not only threaten work stoppages, but also inflict political retribution upon office holders who do not respond to their demands. Unlike workers in private industry, those in government sit on both sides of the bargaining table. Through their unions and associations they can press their managers for increased wages, and as voters they can threaten ungenerous officials. In cities such as New York taxpayers have already learned the high cost to them of a Police Benevolent Association and a Uniform Firefighters Association. Annual salaries and fringe benefits may cost the city more than $25,000 per employee! New York City's municipal employees, 400,000 strong, are an electorate of such size and organization that political candidates in both the city and state must reckon with them.

At the national level, Congress has shown itself reluctant to check federal pay increases in recent years, though earnings have been outpacing all except construction wages at least since 1968. In attempting to control the wages of state and local government employees, federal authorities run up against constitutional and political difficulties. In an election year neither Congress nor the President is eager to cut local programs or to trim grants to potential voters and supporters. In addition, important administrative obstacles have to be surmounted: The employing units and agencies are scattered, authority is decentralized, and standards are varied. Monitoring wage adjustments in such service industries as health, private education, entertainment, and household maintenance is exceedingly difficult. The employing firms, schools, hospitals, or laboratories are small compared to industrial corporations; many are unorganized, determine their wage rates and fix fringe benefits through no regular procedures, and are completely unstandardized with regard to data records, occupational classifications, and personnel policies. If the federal authorities try to encourage officials of local and state government and managers in the service industries to concern themselves with raising productivity, they face the same, if not worse problems. Providing incentives for efficient operation is probably a long-term task that will contribute little to the present joust with inflation.

Certainly, in the future government officials in both the legislative

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and executive branches will have to become more sensitive to the inflationary impact of the programs they devise and the expenditures they make. With government purchases of goods and services now reaching the rate of $233 billion a year—22 per cent of Gross National Product—their inflationary potential is too great for anyone to ignore. Instead of blaming big business and big industrial labor, as some economists suggest, government officials are going to have to recognize their own responsibility for a major share of our economic difficulties.

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That "housing problem" —the American vs. the European experience

IRVING WELFELD

BEGIN at the beginning: There is housing *production* and there is housing *assistance*. They are two different things—and if you forget they are different, you are in trouble.

The focus of housing *production* is the creation of a new dwelling unit; its prime justification and purpose is the community's need for additional dwellings. The focus of housing *assistance* is the need of some citizens for a subsidy if they are to be able to afford decent housing, old or new; its prime justification and purpose is the community's sense of obligation to provide these citizens with suitable accommodations. In Europe, a clear distinction is drawn between housing production and housing assistance. Since 1937, the basic American approach has been to combine the production and assistance function in a single program. Thus, public housing[1]—the sole

[1] "Public housing":—This housing is, as a general rule, developed, owned, and administered by local public housing authorities. Projects are financed through the sale of tax-exempt bonds to private investors. The federal government agrees to make annual subsidy payments in sufficient amounts so that rent of the project need cover only the expenses of operation, repair, and maintenance, and a payment (in lieu of taxes) to the locality equal to 10 per cent of the shelter rent (rent less utilities). Eligibility for residence, in general, is limited to families in the lowest income group and to low-income households that are either elderly or displaced.

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housing-subsidy vehicle until the 1960's—attempted to solve the nation's housing shortage, while meeting the needs of the ill-housed, by subsidizing the production of new housing units for the poor. The troubles that public housing has run into give us good reason to look at the European experience and see what we can learn from it.

True, since the late 1940's, America has made great strides in overcoming its housing shortage. The 1970 census found that of over 63 million housing units in the United States, fewer than four million lacked a full complement of plumbing facilities and fewer than one and a half million units were overcrowded (using as a standard more than one and a half persons per room). But, alas, the cause of this improvement was but minimally related to direct government support of housing for low-income families. Public housing completions during the 1948-1967 period were less than 475,000. Public and publicly-assisted housing accounted for less than two per cent of the 30 million starts in the 20 years between 1948 and 1968. Indeed, the net effect of government action on the housing stock in the 1950's and 1960's was negative—demolitions of housing by public action destroying more units than were built.

By the end of the 1950's a consensus had emerged that public housing was incapable of solving the housing problems of the poor. This can be seen from a remarkable document published in 1960 by the Housing and Home Finance Agency (the predecessor of the Department of Housing and Urban Development), the agency responsible for administering the program. The document, like the Biblical book of *Lamentations*, is a veritable catalogue of woes. More than a decade before Forest Hills came to be associated with public housing's quandary rather than with championship tennis, public housing's defects included (1) poorly located sites, (2) economic and racial segregation, (3) poor design, and (4) high development cost. Some criticized public housing for having income limits that were too low, others for having income limits that were too high. While some called for ending the program, others criticized it as being inadequate. Support of public housing (even in someone else's neighborhood) had broken down as a litmus paper test to distinguish liberals from conservatives. The whole program was a muddle.

Mobilizing the private sector—the 1960's

Given the success of private enterprise in meeting the needs of middle-income and upper-income households, it seemed obvious

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(or at least plausible) that what was missing in America was subsidized private production for the low-income market. This idea mobilized traditionally conservative housing industry groups in support of a liberal housing program. The 1960's therefore saw, not only a succession of programs in which public subsidies to private enterprise became the vehicle of housing production for the poor, but also increasing "privatization" of public housing through the various "turnkey" programs, which provide roles for the private sector ranging from site assembly and development to management and ownership.

The 1960's also witnessed attempts to provide housing subsidies to families with incomes that could be classified as "moderate" and "lower," as opposed to the "low-income" households served by public housing. The original rent supplement proposal in 1965 sought to serve an income group that could not purchase standard housing for 20 per cent of their income, but which was nevertheless above the public housing admission limits. The thrust of the proposal was the creation of a program that might rapidly increase the supply of standard housing at not too great a cost to the Treasury. The program also introduced the concept of a tenant subsidy which varied according to need. This was not only judged more equitable but was also consistent with budgetary concerns, since (a) a full subsidy would not be used in cases where a partial one would do, and (b) if a tenant's income rose, the program's cost would be reduced (or the program could be expanded at no extra cost). Such a graded subsidy scheme also made unnecessary the eviction of families whose incomes had risen above the point of need, thus (a) encouraging economic integration in subsidized housing and (b) eliminating one of the major sore points of public housing—the disincentive to economic advancement produced by a program in which eviction is the mark of economic success.

The 1965 program ran into a great deal of legislative flak from both the left and right flanks. From the left came the argument that the program was unjustified, since there were still vast unmet needs of lower-income families. So the income limits were pushed down to public housing levels—and the program became enmeshed in all of the dilemmas it was supposed to resolve. True, the program enlisted private enterprise, but the introduction of new players did not change the rules of the game. The limitations imposed by Congress were just as successful in shackling private enterprise as they had been in shackling public enterprise.

In 1968, however, the story was very much different. Then, the

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Johnson Administration's interest-subsidy proposals were enacted in a fit of exuberance by a Congress that was in a state of innocence with regard to the mechanics of mortgage financing. These new programs, section 235 and section 236, have indeed unleashed private enterprise. The *homeownership subsidy program* (section 235)[2] resulted in 116,000 starts in 1970 and approximately 150,000 starts in 1971. The *rental subsidy program* (section 236)[3] reached 105,000 starts in 1970 and 130,000 starts in 1971. This achievement does not reflect—nor has it caused—a major shift in legislative opinion. It was all an accident. Ironically, it resulted from determined opposition in Congress to high levels of production for precisely the group the program is so successfully serving! A closer look at the legislative history and financial operation of the section 236 program illustrates the point.

The misconceptions of the lawmakers

As in 1965, the Administration set out in 1968 to obtain a high-volume program. The main features of the proposal were an interest-differential payment to the lender (in order to permit the owner to pay only a one per cent interest rate), and income limits close to the local median. In response to a query as to why lower income limits weren't used, Secretary Weaver answered:

> By having the more liberal upper limits, you have the possibility of getting a greater volume quicker and also of providing relatively small subsidies to those who need less help but still need some help in order to obtain decent housing.

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[2] Section 235, homeownership program:—This housing is developed by private builders. Units are financed through private lending institutions and the mortgages are insured by the FHA at a market interest rate. Interest-subsidy payments are paid to the mortgagee sufficient to cover the difference between (a) the cost of debt service (interest plus amortization of principal), taxes, insurance, mortgage insurance, and (b) 20 per cent of the household's adjusted income. The maximum amount of the interest-subsidy payment is the difference between debt service at the market rate of interest (plus the mortgage insurance premium) and one per cent.

[3] Section 236, rental program:—This housing is developed, owned, and administered by private limited-profit or nonprofit sponsors. Projects are financed through private lending institutions and the mortgages are insured by the FHA at a market interest rate. The mortgagors' interest payments to the mortgagee are made as if the interest rate of the mortgage were equal to one per cent. HUD pays the mortgagee the difference between one per cent and the market rate. Each tenant must pay the greater of (a) a basic rental (calculated on the basis of a mortgage with a one per cent interest rate) or (b) 25 per cent of his adjusted income. Rentals collected by the mortgagor in excess of basic charges are returned to HUD.

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But Congress did not really like this idea at all. The liberals deplored such high income limits; the conservatives deplored the subsidies. The liberal-dominated Senate cut the income limits to 70 per cent of local median income, for 80 per cent of the funds. The remaining 20 per cent of the funds could be provided for families that exceeded these limits. It simultaneously allowed a $300 deduction for each minor child. Republican Senators were critical, with Senators Bennett, Tower, and Hickenlooper stating: "To allow that 46 per cent, or, almost half, of our nation's families must be supported by their government, to say nothing of 70 per cent, is certainly not acceptable in our opinion."

To assure that the households affected were genuinely interested in housing, and not merely taking advantage of a good thing, the permissible rent/income ratio under section 236 was raised by the House from 20 to 25 per cent. The 25 per cent figure was plucked from the air. The U. S. Census for 1960 indicated that 80 per cent of families in the $4,000-$4,999 range have a gross rent-to-income ratio of less than 25 per cent; and in the $6,000-$6,999 range, 83 per cent of the households pay less than 20 per cent. The rationale for the 25 per cent ratio was given in the following colloquy involving Rep. Brock, the author of the House amendment (who had unsuccessfully attempted to impose a 25 per cent ratio in the homeownership program):

> Mr. Eckhardt: If the . . . first amendment had been passed, would he offer this amendment at 30 per cent . . . ?
> Mr. Brock: I think that probably I would and maybe 40 per cent. . . . I honestly hope we could reduce this program . . .

The more conservative House was also not satisfied by the rollback of the regular income limits to 70 per cent of median income, and cut back (they thought) the maximum permissible income even farther—to a figure representing 130 per cent of the income that would make one eligible for local public housing admission. A Senate-House Conference Committee finally settled on a 135 per cent figure.

The use of income limits based on public housing eligibility did not result, as will be seen, in a program that serves, in the words of Rep. Reuss, "paupers plus 30 per cent." Neither did it, in the words of Rep. Barrett, "cripple the program." The main result of this arcane game of income limits and rent/income ratios, contrary to *everyone's* expectations, was to prime the program for production and to price the poor right out of the program.

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The wonderful world of FHA mortgage finance

The secret of section 236's production success lies in the key elements that had to be considered in calculating a mortgage based on debt service. These elements were the interest rate, the income limits, and the rent/income ratio.

The one per cent interest rate means that a small amount of net rental income can support a large mortgage. The problem is how to generate that small amount of net income from a project geared to a lower-income segment of the population. The first step is to estimate low on future operating expenses. If Congressmen are attuned to the voice of their constituents, government employees are attuned to the voice of Congress. The latter had proclaimed that the name of the game was production when, in 1968, it set a goal of six million subsidized units for the decade. Since, in any event, future operating expenses are "guesstimates," the developer invariably guessed low and received the benefit of the doubt.

In the case of the gross income of the tenants, not only was the voice of Congress heard but the written law could be read. The use of a 25 per cent rent/income ratio in the law squeezes more income out of poor prospective tenants. But, most surprising, the prospective and permissible tenants under the law turned out not to be that poor. The "lower"-income levels of the section 236 program—135 per cent of the income limits for public housing admission—are surprisingly high. Translated into specific income limits for specific localities, the results are quite liberal. The table below sets forth the permissible income limits, under section 236, in representative areas of the country before and after adjustment (addition of $300 per child and dividing by 95 per cent), for a family of four. It illustrates how close the regular section 236 adjusted limits are to the median income limits in the various localities.

Locality	Median Income Limit	Section 236 Unadjusted Limit	Section 236 Adjusted Limit	Percent of Median
Concord, N. H.	9,050	7,020	8,020	89
Boston	9,600	7,695	8,730	90
Brockton, Mass.	8,500	6,955	7,950	94
New Orleans	8,200	6,480	7,460	91
San Antonio	7,300	6,345	7,310	100
Dallas	7,950	5,670	6,600	83
Seattle	8,850	7,155	8,060	90

This miscalculation of Congress as to who would be eligible for rental subsidy under section 236 has turned out to be a boon for

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developers. After all, the key obstacle to the production of new subsidized housing is, frequently, neighborhood opposition. "Subsidized housing" conjures up the specter of a drab and dreary public housing project, and homeowners adjacent to the project immediately see the loss of their most precious possession—the equity in their house. The best possible defense for HUD and the developer is to prove to the neighbors that the units, although labeled "lower-income housing," are in fact nothing of the sort. This proof they were now able to offer.

Profit is also known to be a motive in the activities of private entrepreneurs. All the cards are stacked in favor of higher-cost units. There is little difference in time and talent (the developer's most precious commodities) in developing a 100-unit project with a per-unit cost of $16,000 rather than $14,000. Moreover:

(1) If the mortgager is also a builder, the size of his fee is directly related to the size of his mortgage.
(2) The size of his permitted equity return is also directly dependent on the cost of the project.
(3) The value of the project on the "depreciation-deduction sales market" varies directly with the size of the mortgage.
(4) The management fee, in the usual case, is directly related to the project's *gross* income (i.e., before deducting operating and capital expenses) and, therefore, to the size of the mortgage.

Of course, higher costs and rents may reduce the number of aspiring tenants. This factor is severely diluted, however, by the subsidy, which results in an approximately 34 per cent discount from the otherwise economic rent of the unit. And just as the market constraints are diluted by the subsidy, the usual HUD constraints are diluted by the nature of the subsidy payment. A $1,000 increase in cost results in only a few-dollar increase in the monthly subsidy per tenant. The increase in cost need not even result in increased expense to the government if the project can draw higher-income (and, therefore, higher-rent paying) tenants.

The increased initial costs can also be justified on the basis of improving the economic soundness of the project. The mortgage that is insured is to be amortized over 40 years. If economic obsolescence is not to come many years prior to physical obsolescence, the building should contain many features that are considered "luxuries" today but which will be considered "necessities" tomorrow.

The consequence of this exotic brew of legislative unawareness, legal sleight of hand (in defining income limits), haphazard patterns of local public housing income limits, financial leveraging, and tax

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shelter economics was a fountain of profits that attracted producers and investors like flies to honey. A lot of housing began to be built.

It's beginning to look like Europe (in the 1950's)

The present interest-rate subsidies in many ways resemble the classical European housing production programs. In Europe during the 1950's, the governmental programs usually involved deep, long-term subsidies to the non-poor. In addition, the subsidized programs accounted for a large percentage of total construction. In Sweden and France, over 90 per cent of new construction was and still is subsidized. In the Netherlands, the figure is 80 per cent. In England, all non-luxury, rental housing is subsidized by the government. The only exception to the rule is Switzerland, which in 1960 had no subsidized housing. The unique situation in Switzerland is partly explained by (1) the very low interest rates that prevail in a nation of bankers and (2) first mortgages that do not require any payments of principal.

With a high percentage of new construction being subsidized for a long term, the housing stock grows arithmetically while budget costs increase geometrically. Although in most cases the incomes of the housed families rose substantially over time, the standard European housing production approach did not have graded rents and did not allow the system to recapture a portion of the subsidies.

In the European context, a good reason existed for not insisting on a graded rent (or on a means test prior to receipt of a production subsidy). Government officials were not only faced with a housing shortage, but also with rent control. As a result of rent control, the very households that could most afford a new unit were already living in low-priced units. The need was to entice these households, who had a low rent/income ratio, into new units. The imposition of a high rent/income ratio or high income limits would have been counterproductive, in both a figurative and literal sense.

In the longer run, however, these subsidies produced an absurd situation. As long as a housing shortage continued, the government was compelled to attract households into new units. With increasing interest rates and rising construction costs, the government discovered that only the higher-income households could afford the new subsidized units. However, these families were already living in comfortable, older, rent-controlled, and subsidized units—usually with ample space, since their needs had shrunk with time. On the other hand, poorer young families, who could not afford new

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units, and were effectively barred from the older subsidized units, were often left out in the cold. The result of the policy was, in the words of the late Charles Abrams, "free enterprise for the poor and socialism for the rich."

It is of interest that the problems caused by continued and excessive subsidization are quite similar to those caused by rent control. In both cases, governmental actions result in artificially low housing expenditures, a misallocation of housing resources, and a bestowal of benefits on the basis of chance rather than need. The main distinction is that, in the case of subsidies, the cause is the government's generosity, whereas in the case of rent control it is an overzealous regulation of private enterprise.

Europe in the 1970's: the new pattern

European countries by the second half of the 1960's were faced with the choice between efficiency and equity. They could opt for efficiency and reduce the subsidy, or they could opt for equity and make more housing subsidies available for lower-income households. The Europeans opted for both. They were able to do so because they made the crucial distinction between housing *production* and housing *assistance*. Efficient production was sought by reforming production programs and greater equity was sought by expanding assistance programs.

(1) *Production Programs.* The response to the production problem was a streamlining of subsidies. Shallower and shorter-term subsidies have been introduced. These shallower subsidies not only save money, but also bring into balance the social benefits and economic costs.

The German, Dutch, and Danish systems are typical of the new approach. The Dutch system involves an initial markdown of rentals to close to 50 per cent of the "economic rent" based on costs. However, the subsidy is annually reduced by six per cent (10 per cent in the case of homeowner), and therefore entirely phased out in a 10 to 15 year period. The German system involves an initial markdown of a little under 40 per cent. The subsidy is, however, reduced by one third every four years, and is entirely eliminated for over-income tenants. The Danish system involves an even smaller percentage reduction. At present, the initial reduction is approximately 25 per cent—the difference between a 6.5 per cent mortgage loan and an 11 per cent market loan. The subsidy is, however, reduced to zero at the end of seven years, and the subsidy amount is to be

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repaid over the next seven years. Such streamlining is possible in these systems since the programs do not pretend to serve the lower-income groups. True, in Denmark a priority is given to families with incomes below the median. The option is meaningless, however, since they cannot afford the rent.

(2) *Assistance Programs.* On the assistance front, European governments introduced or expanded housing assistance programs for poor people. The primary purpose of these programs is to provide housing dollars to the poor. They, however, also have a number of other important, albeit subsidiary, objectives. One of these is encouraging population growth—a traditional aim of European governments. Another is to encourage the upgrading of housing standards. Payment is often conditioned on residence in units that meet minimum standards of size, facilities, and even age. In Sweden the program was originally limited to units constructed after 1941. In the Netherlands assistance is still limited to units built since 1960.

Housing assistance is also a strategy that is consistent with a policy of disengagement by governments from intervention in the housing market. In Denmark and Germany, the decontrol of rental housing and the introduction of housing allowances went hand in hand. In England, the introduction of an assistance system and the removal of rent regulation are the crucial part of the Conservative Government's "Fair Deal for Housing." One of the reasons for government disengagement from an active role is a growing realization that bureaucratic hands were no match for the invisible hand of the market place. Rent control and long-term government subsidies left a situation in Europe in which there were serious mismatches. Occupants of rent-controlled or subsidized units were often paying an inordinately small amount for rent and/or using far more space than they needed. An assistance system permits the government to disengage from its role as a resource allocator, and place this function in the hands of a mechanism—the market—far more suited to play that role.

The actual weight given in each nation to these varying objectives, as well as the different conditions from which they begin, results in very different types of systems. They all, however, run into one common obstacle: the heritage of rent control. The key to success for a shallow-subsidy production program and housing allowances for the poor lies in the fluidity of the existing housing market. Unless the government can increase household mobility in the existing stock, a shallow-subsidy program is doomed to failure. If households don't move from old to new housing when the subsidies are large,

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they certainly won't move when subsidies are small. It therefore becomes essential for the success of a shallow-subsidy strategy to unfreeze rents. But even rent decontrol is often not enough. With a large sector of the housing stock in the hands of local public and nonprofit groups, the decontrol of rent often does not result in a rise in rent. These latter groups, being political creatures, just do not respond in the same manner as the classical "economic man."

The initial step of rent decontrol is a difficult enough decision. Some countries, such as France, have not even approached the matter, while others, such as Sweden, have toyed with the idea, but believing in the maxim that "discretion is the better part of caution," have stepped gingerly away.

The step beyond rent decontrol is the far more difficult one. It involves government intervention to force rents up in existing housing, rather than to keep them down. In spite of the political acrobatics required by such a move, the Netherlands and England, in the name of "harmony and fairness," have decided to take this leap into the unknown.

Just how well this twofold European strategy with regard to housing production and housing assistance will work, it is far too early to say. But one can say this: Were it not for the heritage of rent controls, there would be every reason to expect it to work quite well. And this has a direct bearing upon America's housing problem, since—always excepting New York City—we have no such heritage to get in our way.

Back to the United States

The high production totals of American subsidy programs begin to pose many of the same problems as the old-fashioned European programs. The first is the obvious one of budgetary cost. The problem was stated as follows in the Third Annual Report on National Housing Goals submitted by President Nixon to Congress on June 29, 1971:

> In calendar year 1968, the Federal Government subsidized about 10 per cent of all new housing units produced; last year, the figure was up to almost 25 per cent and it is scheduled to remain in this range this year and next. It is estimated that subsidized housing units started or projected for the three fiscal years 1970-72 have already obligated the Federal Government to subsidy payments of perhaps $30 billion over the next 30 to 40 years. And assuming the completion of the six million subsidized units for low- and moderate-income families called for in the

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10-year housing goals by 1978, present estimates suggest that the Federal Government will by that year be paying out at least $7.5 billion annually in subsidies. Over the life of the mortgages this could amount to the staggering total of more than $200 billion. Any increase in the number of units to be subsidized beyond those called for in the 10-year goal will only add further to the claims on future budgets.

The second problem is the one of equity. This has at least two aspects. The first is that the program does not serve the poor that Congress wished to serve. The incentives of the interest-subsidy programs are such that it is in the developer's interest to build the most expensive project. The result of the high-cost units is high government costs (since the subsidy is a debt service one). Nevertheless, in spite of the high subsidies, the lower-income household which the program was intended to reach is being squeezed out. In the typical case, the household with an income under $5,000 must pay over 30 per cent of its income for subsidized housing. With rising operating costs, developments which rely on low-income households will almost certainly default on their mortgages. This is already happening on an ominous scale. The only way for the program to survive is to attract higher-income households. However, in the words of the National Tenants Organization, this would be a "perversion of subsidies from the neediest families."

A classic formulation of the second aspect of the equity problem is the following letter from a concerned constituent to his Congressman:

> As a member of the usually silent majority and an ardent supporter of yours I believe that I should bring to your attention some things that, from my point of view, should be corrected. First of all, I am a young man of 25 employed as the personnel supervisor of a growing concern in the area where my wife is also employed. Between us we earn approximately eleven thousand dollars per year and live within our means in a modest three-room apartment in a 40-year-old building. A new [subsidized] housing area . . . is now open for tenants who earn less than six thousand per annum. *These apartments are as large or larger than ours and in beautiful condition, and the rent is actually less than I am paying. Is it possible that this situation can be justified?*

Perhaps there is a way to justify this situation. But if there is, no Congressman has as yet found it.

A non sequitur and a myth

Two major justifications for deep-subsidy programs to non-poor households have been (1) that these households cannot afford new

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housing and (2) that the nation is facing a massive housing shortage. The first of these is a non sequitur, the second a myth.

Wallace Smith has summarized and demolished the first justification:

> Housing commentators in the United States are fond of producing data which show that new housing is priced beyond the means of most of the middle-income population as well as the low-income group. It is a non sequitur to conclude that middle-income households require housing subsidies, because this group finds its housing primarily in the *existing* stock of dwellings. Indeed, *the ordinary homebuilder's reason for not trying to build homes for the lower-middle income group is that he cannot compete with the used housing market where such families get substantially more for their housing dollar.* (Emphasis added)

As for the "housing shortage," Frank Kristof, commenting on the 1970 census, has noted:

> The nation's housing problem has little relationship to physical shortages of housing. If anything, the evidence suggests housing surplus rather than housing shortage. *For two decades the nation has produced an average of 1.5 new housing units for each new household added. . . .* Any talk of housing shortage in America constitutes one of the great mythologies of housing discussion. (Emphasis added)

All this is not meant to prove or suggest that there are no areas in the country in which there is a deficiency of standard housing, or that the poor do not face very real housing problems. It is, however, meant to indicate that misjudging the scale and the nature of present housing problems is perhaps the one sure way to bar a solution.

Some European lessons: production

The European experience not only provides a perspective for understanding our problem but also suggests solutions that may be appropriate. On the production side, the European practice of separating production from assistance is helpful in removing many of the seemingly insoluble cost and equity dilemmas. Once it is recognized that the justification for the subsidy is the need of a particular community for additional housing and that the benefits which accrue to private individuals are incidental by-products, the problem of drawing the line on income limits evaporates. It doesn't matter, for this purpose, *who* lives in *what* house or apartment—so long as there are enough houses and apartments for everyone to live in.

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The question then becomes one of setting forth the objectives of an efficient production strategy and of designing specific programs. A production strategy in America should have the following objectives:

(1) *Low Cost per Net Additional Unit.* The ideal production program should result in a unit that would not otherwise be produced—and at the lowest possible cost to the federal government. Present HUD programs only partially fulfill this ideal. The subsidy to public housing authorities results in a unit that would otherwise not be built—but at a high cost to the federal government. A program in which most of the benefits go to high-income households achieves a low per-unit cost—but only a fraction of the units subsidized would not have been built otherwise. *The ideal production program would therefore aim at marginal new housing buyers (or renters) in the median-income range.* The *total* subsidy per unit (house or apartment) could be under $1,500; this is less than 10 per cent of the projected section 236 costs and less than five per cent of the projected cost of apartments in new public housing.

(2) *Responsiveness to Local Market Conditions.* A well-designed production strategy should take into consideration regional differences in incomes and housing costs. Even more important, programs should be operative only in areas in which there are shortages. One of the great weaknesses of current HUD programs is that they are not attuned to the nation's diversity. Nationwide mortgage limitations result in "lower-income" housing programs producing luxury or middle-income units in some areas of the country while being totally inoperative in other areas. It also often means that high national production totals are achieved by glutting some markets and ignoring areas where a shortage exists.

(3) *Market Discipline.* A housing production strategy should provide incentives for efficiency. The interest of the producer, the consumer, and the government should all be pulling in the same direction. At present, all of HUD's programs are perversely constructed. The fact that the subsidy is in the form of a debt service means that the highest subsidy in the program goes to households that can afford the most expensive units! Under the section 235 program, the household with an $8,000 income has the same mortgage payment whether it purchases a $14,000 or $24,000 house. The present programs also insulate the builder from market competition for tenants. Thus, a $75 subsidy payment in the section 236 program may represent only a $25 cost saving to the consumer.

Since we are here dealing with a shallow-subsidy program, the

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European experience is especially valuable. Their subsidy programs involve substantial initial subsidies *but with a phasing out of all subsidies over a period of years.* At the moment, European subsidies are not performing smoothly. These hitches, however, reflect conditions, already mentioned, that seem to be unique to Europe. First, the continued existence of rent control, which results in an artificially high gap between the rents of old and new units, dampens the fires of consumer demand. Second, the substantial portion of the older housing supply in Europe that is subsidized reduces the attractiveness of new units with shallow subsidies, especially at a time when interest rates and construction costs are rising rapidly. Finally, the market for new housing is proportionally much smaller in Europe than in America. Whereas in the United States the cost of constructing a new house is approximately two times median annual income, in Europe the ratio is three and four to one. Given these harsh European conditions the amazing thing is not that production thrives but that it survives. If such a program were transplanted to the fertile soil of America and nurtured by efficient and aggressive homebuilders, the main problem would be to limit its expansion.

Some European lessons: assistance

A full-scale housing production program following the European model would solve only half the American housing problem, and the lesser half at that. What is, of course, essential is a program that will enable poor households to afford the cost of living in decent housing.

The absence of a large-scale housing assistance program in America has been costly both to the poor and to the nation's housing supply. In order to obtain standard housing, the poor must pay a very high percentage of their income as rent. If the poor are unwilling or are unable to pay, however, they are not the only ones who suffer. To again cite Dr. Kristof:

> Normally, the increasing availability of older housing should lead to a (relative even if not absolute) drop in its price and its readier availability to low-income families. But the fragmentary evidence suggests that the price drop in the housing occupied by low-income minority in-migrants, to the extent that it occurred, in many areas had led to disinvestment and deterioration through decreased maintenance by owners of rental properties. . . . As a consequence, large quantities of central cities' housing stock not only filtered down but filtered out of the housing market because owners cut their losses by ceasing to operate their properties—in short, abandonment.

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Nor is abandonment a fate reserved for old housing. The costs of the section 236 program are so high that the poor can only live in them if they are willing to pay upwards of 30 per cent of their income for housing. Since in many areas the poor are refusing to make this type of bargain, many projects—although they may be no more than one or two years old—are rushing along the road of deterioration and default.

On the public housing side, a ceiling has been imposed on rent by raising the subsidy sky-high. The Brooke Amendment, enacted in 1968, limits the tenant contribution to 25 per cent of income. In new high-cost projects the government contribution often exceeds $200 per month for each apartment. Even so, public housing is becoming a less and less appealing alternative even for the poor. In the words of a friendly critic, E. D. Huttman:

> Public housing is perceived as an unhappy, stigmatized environment by tenants and public alike. To the tenant it is a stressful environment created by poor management policies, the unacceptable actions of other tenants, the isolation and size of the projects, and the socially unpleasant aspects of the housing design itself. To a large proportion of the public today, it is viewed negatively as a government repository for socially unfit families. Ironically, a public effort to build decent housing for the poor has produced housing whose reputation is worse than that of the slums.

Even if public and publicly-assisted housing did produce "penthouses for the poor," they would still involve a cruel game of chance for most of the poor. At best, there is fewer than one unit of assisted rental housing for every 10 low-income households. The program of building new houses for the poor can be compared to a program that would allow a select few of the poor to eat in French restaurants while the rest of them are left to scrounge for the remains.

Again, the European experience here has great relevance to America. As in the case of shallow production subsidies, there is no question of the workability of a large-scale housing assistance program. The objectives of the American assistance program would, however, not be the same as those in any particular European country. The absence of a significant housing shortage, and the absence (until quite recently) of rent control, would mean that an American assistance program could concentrate on providing poor households with the means to pay for decent, safe, and sanitary housing in a suitable environment. *Such a program should not be designed to stimulate either directly or indirectly the production of new units.* To

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the extent these latter programs are necessary, they should be designed for a different income class.

The income class to be served by the assistance program should be primarily those at the poverty line and below, in the particular locality. The program would be aimed at providing these households with the widest possible choice of housing. As a corollary, the government subsidy would vary with the percentage of income the household pays for housing. The higher the percentage, the higher the subsidy. If a family decides that it wishes to spend a small percentage on housing (or to put it more positively, if the family wishes or is required to allocate a higher percentage toward medical or educational expenses) and as a result lives in substandard housing, this becomes a matter of free choice. The government will have fulfilled its obligation to provide the family with the means to pay for decent housing. For the government to go farther and force the family into a rigid expenditure pattern is a remedy which might very well be far more unpleasant than the illness itself.

This argument in favor of greater freedom and dignity for the poor household raises the question: Why not go the complete route and just give the household money to spend as it pleases? In theory, this is a valid objection. However, this is not the choice we face. Although the recipient might be better off with a direct cash payment, it is unlikely that Congress will enact a cash transfer program with a level of payment high enough to enable the poor to pay for standard housing in high-cost areas. The reasons for this include the costs of such a program, regional variations in the cost of living, the disincentives to work for low-paid workers, and Congressional unwillingness to see money "frittered" away for "non-essentials." As James Tobin has written, "The social conscience is more offended by severe inequality in nutrition and basic shelter . . . than by inequality in automobiles, books, clothes, furniture . . ."

The housing assistance program could be piggybacked on to the general assistance program. In areas where low-priced housing is available, or where general assistance has been raised to a level that permits occupancy in standard units without undue pressure on the family budget, no (or very small) housing assistance payments would be made. Finally, although the housing assistance payment has no production function, the payments—by creating an effective demand for well-maintained older properties—will markedly improve the nation's housing stock.

The European experience indicates that, given a minimum of bu-

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reaucratic "eptness," the administrative problems of such a program are not too great. Nor is the budgetary problem. The cost of such a program would be in the $5-10 billion range annually (assuming a subsidy reaches approximately 10 million poor households). Is this a lot of money? It certainly isn't, considering that the President's Report indicates we shall be spending $7.8 billion a year in the latter part of the decade if we continue our present programs, which have a proven track record of offering a maximum of aggravation and a minimum of assistance.

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Crime and punishment and social science

MARTIN A. LEVIN

UNTIL now, most public discussion of crime prevention has emphasized the highly visible and dramatic role of the police. Yet, in all probability, the police have less impact on the extent of crime than do the decisions of judges to sentence convicted criminals to prison or to let them remain free on probation. The judges' decisions are crucial because such a large proportion of those arrested for crimes—from roughly 35 to 55 per cent, depending on the way one measures it—are "recidivists," i.e., repeaters. And whether a person recidivates seems to be significantly affected by the type of sentence and treatment he gets upon conviction for his initial crime.

Such sentencing and treatment is less a matter of law than of judicial discretion. Criminal court judges exercise a great deal of discretion in handing down sentences. For example, in 1966 the rate at which probation was granted to convicted felons by the superior courts in the 13 largest counties of California was found to vary from 7.2 per cent (in Fresno) to 40.7 per cent (in Alameda). I found a variation from 37 per cent in Minneapolis to 49 per cent in Pittsburgh in my study of criminal courts in those two cities. An interesting question arises: What are the consequences for recidivism —and ultimately for the crime rate—in such variations?

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Studies of recidivism in various state and federal jurisdictions indicate that sentencing—both granting of probation and, for those sent to jail or prison, the length of the sentence—has a definite impact on recidivism. *Offenders who receive probation have significantly lower rates of recidivism than those who have been incarcerated, and incarcerated offenders receiving shorter sentences generally have a somewhat lower recidivism rate than those receiving longer sentences.*[1] With a few exceptions, these differences persist when one controls for type of offense, type of community, and offender's age, race, or number of previous convictions.

In addition, and on the other hand, these studies show that there are significant variations in the recidivism rates associated with certain categories of offenders, and that these variations hold true regardless of the sentencing policy—prison or probation, longer or shorter sentence—which is followed. For example, in examining the data of Ronald Beattie and Charles Bridges, I have found that being younger, being black, having a prior record, and having committed a crime against property (auto theft or burglary) or a drug violation —rather than a crime against persons or a sex offense—all correlate with higher recidivism rates. But for the most part, even when one makes allowances for this kind of variation, the type of treatment prescribed by the judge still seems to have a greater impact on recidivism than do the offender's characteristics or the nature of his offense. There seem to be only two exceptions to this: An offender who has no prior record will have a low recidivism probability, no matter what kind of treatment he receives; and conversely, an offender who has committed auto theft or a drug violation will have a high recidivism probability, again regardless of his post-conviction treatment.

My analysis of Beattie and Bridges' data from 13 California superior courts indicates that, after one year, felons who were granted probation had a "success" rate ("success" defined as the absence of a known arrest for a new crime or of a technical parole or probation violation) of 65.8 per cent, whereas felons who were incarcerated for a year or less had a lower "success" rate of 48.6 per cent. George Davis' study, which covered 56 of California's 58 counties for 1956-58, discovered a smaller but similar difference. When one

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[1] I have reported this more fully in "Policy Evaluation and Recidivism," *Law and Society Review*, August 1971, pp. 17-45. There are more than 15 separate studies of recidivism involving tens of thousands of offenders in more than 20 jurisdictions. Every one of these studies has found this same pattern: the milder the sentence, the lower the rate of recidivism.

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compares Beattie and Bridges' probationers with offenders (also from California) who are incarcerated for two to three years—either by using "success" rates, or by translating their data into "failure" rates (that is, rate of return to incarceration[2])—the differences in recidivism are even larger. For example, the "failure" rate for Beattie and Bridges' probationers was only 10.9 per cent, whereas in the California Department of Corrections (CDC) data it was 30.5 per cent for those incarcerated for two to three years. And if one wishes to compare, not probation with incarceration, but a shorter sentence with a longer sentence, one finds that, among Beattie and Bridges' offenders incarcerated for a year or less, the "success" rate was 48.6 per cent, whereas in the same year Public Systems Incorporated (PSI) found that offenders in all California state prisons who had served a median term of three years had the lower "success" rate of 33.6 per cent.

In short, evaluations of alternative sentencing policies consistently find that, when one controls for a long series of personal characteristics and types of offenses, one can expect lower recidivism rates from those granted probation rather than incarcerated and from those serving one-year rather than two-year to three-year sentences.

What does it mean?

The general finding of lower recidivism among probationers does not necessarily mean that it is probation which *causes* the lower recidivism. It is possible that the differences in recidivism are the result, not of the actual treatment prescribed, but of offender characteristics which influence the judges' decisions. Judges, after all, usually base their sentencing decisions on the characteristics of the offender and his offense. It is possible that the same personal characteristics which recommend an offender to a judge as being worthy of lenient treatment might make that offender a low recidivism risk no matter what treatment—probation or incarceration, longer or shorter sentence—were prescribed for him. And, indeed, my own analysis does suggest that a few characteristics of the offender and his offense may account for *more* of the variation in recidivism rates than the type of treatment he receives.

One cannot test this hypothesis with actual data because the ex-

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[2] The "failure" rate referred to here (following the CDC usage) is not simply the inverse of the "success" rate, for individuals who are arrested but not returned to prison are not included in either category.

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planatory variables are so highly intercorrelated—a problem called "multicollinearity" that haunts much policy analysis in the social sciences. For example, there simply are few persons with no prior record who are incarcerated. Neither are there many blacks with a serious prior record and a narcotics history who are given probation. This makes it close to impossible, even using the newest statistical techniques, to say with any certainty what is "ultimately" to be regarded as the cause of what. But there is an alternative method for analyzing the relationship between sentencing and recidivism: the controlled experiment. As opposed to an evaluation of actual policy decisions, a controlled random experiment can do two things. It can "randomize" the offender characteristics of its population in advance—assuring, for instance, that enough blacks with narcotics histories *are* granted probation so that a researcher can evaluate the effect on recidivism of incarceration or probation *per se*, rather than only that of incarceration combined with blackness and past narcotics use. And, more generally, the experiment can guarantee that the decision to grant probation is not "contaminated" by a real-life decision maker and by his views of the "riskiness" of certain offenders and offenses.

The California Youth Authority has recently been conducting such a controlled experiment in the cities of Stockton and Sacramento to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative treatment programs on convicted juveniles. In this Community Treatment Project (CTP), an initial screening of convicted juvenile delinquents eliminated from the experiment about 25 per cent of the males and 10 per cent of the females, for whom institutionalization was deemed mandatory because they were involved in serious assault cases or because of community objection to permitting them to remain at large. The rest were randomly assigned either to an experimental group which was "returned to the community" (i.e., granted probation) and received intensive counseling, or to a control group which was assigned to regular juvenile penal institutions. After 15 months, the experimental (probation) group had a "failure" rate of 28 per cent, the control (incarcerated) group a rate of 52 per cent; after 24 months, the respective "failure" rates were 38 per cent and 61 per cent. Thus, the experiment seemingly confirmed both (a) the patterns found in the studies of sentencing and recidivism mentioned earlier, and (b) the independent effect of probation in lowering the risk of recidivism.

But this conclusion is by no means certain because this experiment has its own limitations. For one thing, the initial screening

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process obviously limits the extent to which the experiment's conclusions can be generalized. The data indicate that recidivism is less likely if offenders receive probation, but we do not know whether this conclusion applies to the most serious offenders, who were kept out of the experiment. And beyond this, there are other possibly serious flaws. To begin with, the experimental group received *both* probation *and* intensive counseling; there is no way to know which of these two aspects of their treatment is related to their lower "failure" rates. Second, the cities where they lived—Sacramento and Stockton—are not at all typical of the large, industrial, ethnically heterogeneous urban areas from which most offenders come. Neither city has a large black population, for example, though each does have a significant Mexican-American community. Indeed, the variables of race and ethnicity are mentioned nowhere in the CTP experiment.

And finally, it is possible that the experimental group's lower "failure" rate is largely a result of "Hawthorne effects" and is a "positive self-fulfilling prophecy." These terms refer to the oft-noted fact that participants in experiments behave differently both because of the awareness that they are in an experiment and the subject of special attention, and also because the experimenter's expectation often becomes self-fulfilling. The CTP experimental youths see their probation officers from two to five times a week and receive many other kinds of special programs and attention. They are aware of their experimental status and the special attention they receive. The experimental probation officers, moreover, have case loads only one fourth to one eighth as heavy as normal. The CTP reports give indirect evidence that the officers expect the experimental cases to do better than normal and convey these expectations to the youths. These same officers are also the ones who decide whether to revoke probation, thereby "causing" one sort of "failure." It requires no assumption that the CTP officers were deliberately undermining the scientific objectivity of the CTP experiment to imagine ways in which the probation officers' expectations and the youths' intensive contact with them could have changed both the youths' behavior and the officers' measurement of that behavior.

Implications for policy

One can summarize some of the major findings and some of the implied recommendations of the analyses and experiments men-

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tioned above in the following way: For many persons, especially those with certain "favorable" characteristics (e.g., the absence of a prior record), probation can reduce the recidivism rate to approximately 33 per cent. The experiment indicates that for most persons, probation along with intensive and special attention can reduce recidivism to 28 per cent. For most convicted felons, therefore, the type of treatment makes a significant difference. For other felons, however, personal characteristics and the nature of their offense seem more important. The influence of probation on recidivism is thus far from total; but it is clear that knowledge of recidivism rates associated with specific offenses and particular offender characteristics could be of considerable practical value to judges in sentencing.

On the other hand, it must also be emphasized that even among probationers there is a recidivism rate of approximately 33 per cent. This figure represents a very large number of individuals and crimes, and it, as well as the fact that probationers recidivate less than those who are incarcerated, must be taken into account in designing sentencing policies based upon the findings of social science.

What policies do these findings suggest? The first point to be made is that the inability of these studies to establish a causal relationship between sentencing and recidivism does not destroy their value to policy makers. "Pure" social science and "policy" social science are different enterprises with different requirements; what are serious problems to the former need not be such serious problems to the latter. For instance, the CTP's initial screening process may limit the scope of its conclusions, but its finding that probation lowers recidivism for the non-assaultive suggests a sentencing policy that is likely to reduce recidivism: *Screen out those with a history of assault, then grant probation to all other juvenile first offenders.* Similarly, the probable existence of a "Hawthorne" effect in the CTP experiment, though it is unquestionably a flaw from the standpoint of pure social science, also suggests a strategy for treating juveniles: *Juvenile first offenders who are granted probation should be assigned to an intentional "Hawthorne" and "positive self-fulfilling prophecy" program.* Admittedly, it is difficult to institutionalize for large numbers of people a feeling of being part of a special experiment and the subject of special attention; but precedents such as the Hawthorne experiment itself indicate that it is clearly possible, and the CTP experiment indicates that such a program will succeed in reducing recidivism. (It will also be cheaper: The costs

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per youth in the CTP program seem to be about half the per capita cost of incarceration.)

The limits of social science

It must be recognized, however, that there is a crucial limitation on the kinds of conclusions that can be drawn from the social science findings I have summarized. This is that reducing recidivism is not the only goal of the criminal courts. We also expect courts to maintain order and stability in society, to maintain individual liberties, to satisfy a common notion of justice in the sense of equal and consistent treatment, to maintain an image as "fair" institutions, to maintain the declarative and condemnatory functions of the criminal law, and to perform their tasks in a way that is reasonably cost-effective. *Many of these goals are by no means fully consistent with the goal of reducing recidivism.*

For example, an intentional "Hawthorne" program for juveniles along the lines of the CTP would reduce recidivism—but it would also entail a sacrifice of public order and safety, at least in the short run, since almost one third of the CTP probationers did recidivate despite the special attention and intensive supervision they received.

The goal of reducing recidivism conflicts with other values as well. For instance, from what we know about the type of offenders who are most likely to fall into the recidivating group, one clearly could derive the following policy to reduce recidivism: *Incarcerate for the longest terms the youngest offenders, especially if they are black or have a narcotics history.* But such a policy, however effective it might be in reducing recidivism, is obviously unacceptable if the court is to remain in our eyes a fair and non-discriminatory institution which exercises a due regard for equality and individual liberties. Conversely, the same findings of social science with regard to reducing recidivism would dictate that judges *incarcerate for the shortest terms possible under the law whites over 40 who have committed murder or sex crimes!* These groups have extremely low recidivism rates, and such a policy would also save the state money in incarceration costs. But there is little doubt that most people would consider such a policy wrong—both because it discriminates against the young and the black, and because it does not sufficiently express society's disapproval of such grave crimes as murder or rape.

The point here is that the data we have, though significant in

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their own terms, are not entirely "relevant" to the larger context in which the courts must operate. Our penal and judicial systems serve other goals than lowering the rate of recidivism. And the tension among these goals cannot be resolved on utilitarian grounds; one reason is that the punishment of criminals is, in part, a symbolic activity that expresses our ultimate values. Social science cannot prescribe these values for us. What it does seem able to do—for better or worse—is to reveal to us the practical incompatibilities between the many values we accept. This is a thankless task—but not, perhaps, entirely useless.

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Toward an all-volunteer military

MORRIS JANOWITZ

For over 25 years, the United States relied on Selective Service as the means of obtaining military manpower. By July 1973, this system is scheduled to be terminated by Congress. Military authorities have set January 1, 1973 as the target date for the transition to an all-volunteer system, hoping to achieve "zero-level" draft calls by that time.

Thus far the chief means of realizing an all-volunteer armed force has been an economic incentive. The revised schedules will raise the basic pay of a recruit to $268 a month and, if we add allowances, the effective total comes to $4,872 a year, or close to the symbolic $5,000 pay that many analysts thought necessary to achieve an all-volunteer armed force. But a substantial pay raise without a more thoroughgoing reorganization of the armed forces and, indeed, a rethinking of the entire meaning of the military profession, may leave us far from the intended objective.

So far, the steps to adapt the armed forces to an all-volunteer system have been limited. There has been some improvement in the physical character of barracks facilities for enlisted personnel, a wider latitude in the rules about personal appearance, and an alteration of the daily routine of garrison life. In the area of race relations,

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there have been extensive training programs and group discussions, which take into account the new self-consciousness of black personnel. But on the crucial question of the relationship of the military to a *career* pattern, a relationship which links the military to later civilian life, there has been little thought, particularly as it affects officers. Many of the younger military are committed to the success of the all-volunteer system, which they see as an opportunity to institute needed reforms, but the exodus of some of the most intelligent and innovative officers from the ground forces—in part because of the reduction of the military total—squeezes out some of the men who could have taken the lead in the necessary rethinking and reorganization.

On balance, it appears that the United States military will be reduced, by 1975, to an overall total of 1,750,000 men;[1] in fact, the possibility of a force of 1,500,000 men thereafter cannot be ruled out. The reduction in personnel reflects national policy to limit the overall size of the armed forces and the number of troops stationed abroad. The cost of military equipment will rise at a steady rate because of the new machinery that military authorities believe they require; so will personnel costs. To keep the military budget within limits, the trend will be to reduce the size of active-duty personnel. Following the experience of Great Britain, the United States forces will most likely fail (but by a lesser margin) to meet the authorized requirements. An American equivalent of that most descriptive British term, "shortfall," will come into vogue. No doubt a range of factors will account for the failure of the military to meet their recruitment quotas: low prestige of the military profession, family dissatisfaction, excessive job rotation, underemployment during early assignments. However, it is clear that the decline in career prospects will operate as the most powerful negative incentive. Why enter a profession whose career and promotion opportunities are highly uncertain and declining? A powerful element of a self-fulfilling prophecy is already at work; each reduction in forces serves only to dampen new recruitment, especially officer recruitment. Paradoxically, the faster the initial reduction to a long-run troop level the more readily the adaptation can be made to a volunteer force.

[1] President Nixon's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force projected, after the end of the draft, an all-volunteer force of approximately 2.6 million, or slightly less than the total before the pre-Vietnam build-up. In retrospect this appears a major miscalculation, if not a form of self-deception. In the spring of 1971 civilian officials in the Department of Defense were speaking publicly of a post-Selective Service force of approximately 2.25 million, while privately they predicted a more realistic level of 2.0 million. However, it now seems likely that the total will be 1.75 million by 1975.

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But all of this obscures the fact that an all-volunteer force for the first time will be a professional force and the United States will have to confront an issue which it has not had to face before—how a full-time professional military fits into the larger framework of a democratic society. Until now, under Selective Service, there was an admixture of civilians for whom military service was an excursus in their lives; because of this large leavening the army was not walled off from the society. At the same time, the armed services always thought of the officers as a cadre which could be quickly expanded, on the outbreak of war, to include large numbers of reservists and newly inducted officers from civilian life. But given our present doctrine of deterrence, the army that is being created will be a "force-in-being," a self-contained, technically-trained force which presumably will be adequate to maintain the "balance of terror" in nuclear war.

The problem before us, then, is what *kind* of armed forces does a modern democratic society need, and how does professional service in the army, for officers and enlisted men, mesh with civilian life. In short, the military is no longer the distinctive, isolated, "heroic" *calling* of the past, maintaining the "honor" of the society, but is now a *profession* and *occupation* subject to all the vicissitudes which life is hazard to in a bureaucratic setting. Given this changeover, major reorganizations are necessary in the areas of education, career system, deployment, and participation of the military in civilian life, if the men of the quality that is necessary are to be attracted to the service and if the military is to be compatible with the standards of a democratic society. It is to these problems that this essay addresses itself.

The redefinition of career

The all-volunteer service requires a fundamental redefinition of the content and duration of the military career. A significant number of both officers and enlisted men will continue to serve for six years or less; for them, military experience is an interlude in an essentially civilian existence. But for another segment, military service will cover an expanded period of time, often up to 20 years. But where do they go after that? For this group, military service must be redefined as one stage in a two-step career in public service, military service being the first step and entry into the civil service the second. In this way the idea of a career can be shaped.

For enlisted men and women the successful completion of a specified period of service, such as two or three periods of enlistment,

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would constitute effective entrance into civil service employment. The United States Civil Service or the Department of Labor would have the responsibility for placing these people in the federal service or, by negotiation, with state or local governments. Such an approach would make recruitment manageable and insure a higher quality of personnel. It would also make possible reform of the pension system and reduce costs. When an enlisted man transferred to the civil establishment, his pension benefits would be incorporated in his new job and paid upon retirement from civil employment. Or he could, if he wished, opt for private employment and take a military-type pension. Such a system is operating today in the Federal Republic of Germany with considerable effectiveness.

The pattern of the officer career would be restructured to permit a more flexible system of exit from active duty. Today, most officers leave either after short-term duty (two to five years of obligatory service) or after 20 years of service. But an exit with appropriate pension protection after 10 to 12 years is essential for the flow of personnel which takes advantage of the newer skills of the younger men. As in the case of enlisted personnel, after a specified number of years of service officers should have the option of joining the civilian government establishment or have some vested, transferable pension rights. While such an approach can be fully applied only after the present reduction in the size of the officer corps is accomplished, it could be implemented immediately for new officers entering the system.

The armed forces today face the trauma of reduction in force and at the same time the need to retain the most able personnel during a period of contracting opportunities. The impact falls most heavily on the Army and particularly on its officers, the young captains and majors who must anticipate a slow and limited rate of advancement. This is the so-called "hump in rank" which develops during a contraction after a period of rapid expansion. The negative effects are already being felt in the high proportion of able young officers who are planning to leave after their short-term obligatory service.

A system which permits retirement after 10 to 12 years of service is an essential step to enable the armed forces to retire with dignity those of less competence and, at the same time, to reduce the hump-in-rank problem.

However, it is equally essential to deal with the more serious problems posed by the presently expanded number of general officers. The ratio of general officers to total military personnel has grown steadily since the mid-1950's, yet, despite the overall reduction

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of personnel, the Pentagon is reluctant to force out general officers. The excessive number of such officers has a very negative effect as the military struggles to adapt to a new environment. The ground force, in particular, is sharply divided between its junior and mid-career officers who actually fought in Vietnam, and the cadre of senior officers who flew over the battlefield or were in command management positions.

The incorporation of men in their 40's into the general officer group is essential to heal the breach and to offer an incentive for able mid-career officers to remain in the service. But existing retirement procedures are only partially adequate to deal with this problem because of the large numbers involved. A special commission of the Secretary of Defense is necessary to handle the major reduction (as much as 50 or 60 per cent) in the number of active-duty general officers.

Providing a home

Over the years the United States armed forces have evolved a deployment system which reassigns manpower through the continuous movement of personnel. The pattern is justified in the name of preventing stagnation, training personnel for higher command, and adapting the organization to change. During the period between World War I and World War II, the necessity of training a small cadre which could be expanded readily during wartime gave validity to such a service-wide reassignment system. In the post-Vietnam period, as we move toward an all-volunteer force of less than two million, these procedures are outmoded.

The practice is needlessly expensive, it is disruptive of military effectiveness and solidarity, and it serves as one of the major sources of discontent with the conditions of military life. The frequent fluctuations of manpower strength since 1945 to some extent made these patterns of rotation necessary, but the all-volunteer force will have a more stable level of manpower, thus making possible a more stable system of personnel deployment.

In the case of the Army a modified version of the British regimental structure is required. Each enlisted man and each officer would be attached to a basic unit, and a significant portion of his military career would be spent within that brigade, and in rotation of assignments within the brigade. When he is rotated out of his basic unit for staff duty and advanced schooling, he could be expected to return to his original unit. Overseas assignments and rotation home would be

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within the brigade system. For the Navy a home port concept, and for the Air Force a home base, would be the equivalent of an Army brigade. These are not novelties but regular practices in other armies.

One of the most powerful sources of negative attitudes toward career military service, especially among young officers, is the feeling that their talents are underutilized. In the past, military personnel were less sensitive to their immediate assignment, since there was always the assumption that some future war would "break out" and they would be effectively engaged. But in the present political context, officers want to establish a linkage between their immediate assignment and the military purpose. The reliance of the military on short-term officers and the emergence of the concept of deterrence make the issue of boredom and the day-to-day job especially relevant.

One of the changes urgently required is that operational units be given some degree of responsibility for military training. The current practice is to centralize training in specialized training units, a practice which was justified during a period of rapid mobilization and expansion. The allocation of training functions to operational units would make it possible for personnel, especially junior officers, to be more fully engaged; it would also produce important fiscal savings. In many support, technical, and even educational units, underutilization is less a matter of inadequate daily work loads. Here the morale problem derives from the failure of military personnel to be incorporated into the life of the larger military establishment; they feel excluded from the basic mission and purpose. In such units personnel could be organized into the equivalent of fully-alerted reserve units with monthly evening assignments and annual field training operations.

The armed forces have developed extensive educational programs as means of upgrading their personnel, such as programs of basic literacy and the completion of high school and even college-level work. These programs generally make use of civilian personnel and civilian institutions. While such arrangements are generally appropriate, there is considerable room for the employment of qualified active-duty military personnel. Such assignments would not interfere with regular active-duty tasks since they would be secondary and after-duty assignments.

A new kind of education

In all the services, an officer's career is linked to an elaborate system of professional education—initial academy or ROTC schooling

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plus a three-stage, professional, in-service educational step ladder, to which is added specialized courses. For an important minority, there is also an advanced degree at a civilian institution. The successful officer following the prescribed career will spend as much as 25 to 30 per cent of his career in a classroom. Military officers require extensive education; moreover, some of this education is a fringe benefit in that it assists them in the transition to civilian employment after retirement. But the present system is wasteful: It is often mechanical and repetitious, and it involves costly logistical support and a change of duty station. Also, it is generally true that the higher the level of in-service schooling, the more the training becomes merely a form of indoctrination in official policy. Consequently, much military education is resented by military officers as a waste of time of effective portions of their professional career.

Military education, like the reassignment system, is based on the traditional notion of the "outbreak" of war and the need for rapid mobilization of a mass armed force. The services believe that they require a large pool of highly-trained professional officers who have been exposed to higher professional schools, so that if the military had to expand rapidly, enough trained officers would be available for rapid promotion. But with the advent of nuclear weapons, and the doctrine of deterrence, the military has become more a force-in-being, and less a cadre for mobilization; consequently, the existing notions of military education need to be revised.

With the termination of Selective Service, the number of officer recruits who will enter the active service will decline, their academic quality will be lower, and they will be much less representative of the nation as a whole, being drawn largely from the South and Southwest and from rural and small-town areas. In order to maintain the number, quality, representativeness, and vitality of short-term, active-duty reserve officers, two basic changes are required.

First, the military services need to place a stronger emphasis on Officer Candidate Schools for recruitment and training of new officers. Young men who have successfully completed two years of college should be eligible. Many men in the middle of their college careers seek a break in their education, and can be expected to return to college after two to four years of military service; others will be expected to work toward the completion of their college degree while on active duty.

Second, any college student in the United States—either on entrance into college, or when he becomes a junior—should have access to a collegiate ROTC program. In addition to the existing and modi-

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fied ROTC programs in each of the 10 major metropolitan areas, there should be a composite ROTC program which would enroll students from any accredited college in the vicinity. In a particular metropolitan area, one of the existing ROTC units should be responsible for the administration and conduct of the program, but the program should be available to all colleges in the area. In many metropolitan centers, this arrangement is being carried out informally; but it needs to be formalized and publicized.

Basic changes in the nature of officer education are required. First, the format of service academy training needs to be modified in order to insure the maximum integration of the new officer into civilian society. Two paths (or a combination of the two) are possible. One would be to permit all or a portion of the junior class to study at a civilian university in the United States or abroad. Another would be to extend the academy program to five years, one of which would be devoted to a work experience with the Peace Corps or Vista or to some other form of community or business employment.

Second, the three-step, in-service schooling system needs to be consolidated. At a minimum, it should be converted into a two-level system. The most direct approach would be to eliminate the National War College and increase the *interservice* component of the colleges of the three services. Much of the National War College curriculum repeats that of the service war colleges; its atmosphere is doctrinaire and, since it is located in Washington, it places an undue emphasis on current events. The services should make more use of intensive short courses of one or two weeks to deal with new organizational and strategic doctrine. These courses would not involve costly logistical support or change of station, and they would be more flexible as to content and timing. Equally, there should be more alternatives to attendance at the service schools, and their importance in the system of promotion should be reduced. Instead of attendance at a service school, attendance at a civilian institution or participation in a short, intensive military course would be an acceptable substitute. This would increase the diversity of skills, backgrounds, and experience in the armed forces.

The question of authority

The military must face openly and candidly the question of authority. The United States Marine Corps may be able, as its top commanders hope, to maintain its traditional organizational code of repressive basic training and formal ritual and protocol. This may be

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possible since the Marine Corps requires only a small number of men, and any advanced industrialized society produces sufficient young men who are attracted to the aggressive symbolism and "killer" imagery of its enlisted ranks. The United States Marine Corps is a carry-over from nineteenth-century gentlemen-type officers with an admixture of toughs in the ranks. The Marines will persist, but they are more and more incompatible with the emerging political and social values of the larger society—especially in a period in which United States foreign policy operates under the banner "no more Vietnams" or its equivalents, and the purpose of the military is to maintain a defensive posture of deterrent force, operating under the conception of a constabulary.

There is sufficient experience to show that a combat-ready force, fully sensitive to its "heroic" traditions and under the closest operational control, can be trained and maintained without brutality, personal degradation, or "Mickey Mouse" discipline. The armed forces must review their routines, for they do not fully realize the extent to which, in comparison with other highly effective forces, they maintain outmoded procedures. (Thus, for example, saluting on base serves no purpose but to degrade the act; saluting must be reserved for crucial and selected formations.) Military traditions, military ceremonies, and esprit de corps are essential—even more so—in an all-volunteer force. Moreover, these changes will have to be generated by the military itself within the context of standards set by the civilian society. In order to modify and modernize military discipline an all-service commission on these issues needs to be established and a comparison made with the experiences of our allies.

Relation to civilian life

The amenities supplied by the military base are essential for the well-being of the military officer and his family. The military establishment is more of a welfare state than civilian society, and these benefits are important for the retention of personnel. Nevertheless, there is considerable evidence that the military base tends to isolate the military professional from the larger civilian society. In recent years, the Department of Defense has sought to expand off-base housing under the assumption that such facilities are less expensive, or that they relieve the military of the complex of overhead activities associated with military community housing.

Yet there is no reason to believe that off-base housing enhances recruitment or effectively integrates the military into civilian society.

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Relocation of residence into a civilian community does not necessarily produce social integration into civilian society. It may, in fact, produce an off-base ghetto of military families. Off-base housing tends to separate military families from military base facilities, and exposes the family to disruptive pressures so long as high rates of rotation are maintained, especially under conditions where the male head of the household must frequently be away on duty assignments. A delicate balance needs to be maintained. The opportunity for base housing, in particular and appropriate areas, should be expanded. However, the essential issue is that military personnel should have some choice as between residence on or off base. But if the question is one of integration into civilian society, the issue of civic participation is more important than location of residence. What is involved is participation in the voluntary associations which are characteristic of the larger society.

The vitality of the military profession depends on a delicate balance between a special sense of inner-group loyalty and participation in the larger society. Rather than residence per se, the quality of integration in civilian society depends on personal initiative and membership in voluntary religious and community associations. Military regulations and practice encourage participation within the format of nonpartisanship, i.e., without direct affiliation to political party groups. But rotation from one assignment to another limits the ability of a military man and his family to make contact with their community. Some research studies indicate that the level of community participation of military personnel is similar to that of persons in other occupations which have a high degree of job rotation. One would hope, therefore, that the introduction of a modified regimental system with less job rotation would increase the possibilities for more meaningful community integration.

However, new perspectives on civic participation are required if the military profession, under an all-volunteer force, is not to become socially isolated and if it is to maintain and enhance its self-respect. In West Germany the idea that an army man is a civilian in uniform has been pressed to the point at which regular personnel—both officer and enlisted—are permitted to stand for political elections while on active duty. In the American context, the need to avoid a political party affiiliation probably is essential. However, military personnel should be permitted to serve on local school boards, run in nonpartisan local elections, and be members of government advisory boards and public panels wherever they have the essential qualifications, competencies and interest.

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But the issue goes deeper. It is not the responsibility of military personnel to defend and publicize the official military policies of the United States. This is the responsibility of the elected national officials who make policy. However, in the contemporary scene, as the volunteer service becomes more and more a reality, military personnel are highly sensitive to the charge that they are mere "mercenaries." Military personnel who wish to articulate the goals and purposes of the military in a democratic society cannot be deprived of participation in community and public affairs.

By law, and particularly by judicial decree, military personnel now exercise an element of free speech and citizen petition. In a truly pluralistic society, military personnel on active duty should be able to attend educational, community, and public affairs meetings and to state their definition of the legitimacy of their profession. In short, new definitions of civic participation need to emerge which are broader than the existing ones, but still compatible with the nonpartisan stance of American military law and traditions.

Redefining the profession

Men select a profession or occupation for a variety of motives, and in part by accident or the sheer force of immediate circumstances. The military in the future, as in the past, will recruit from among the sons of military families—the same pattern also holds for other professions. But because of the overriding importance of the military, it is essential that there be no concentration of military families (difficult though it may be to define that level). In fact, it is doubtful whether the military could be managed without the particular input of the sons of military families.

The military has distinctive characteristics as to the style of life it offers. In the years ahead, under a volunteer force, some of this distinctiveness will no doubt be maintained. There is also an element of activism in the military life of movement and outdoor living. Even foreign travel attracts some, and leads them to remain. Yet the scope for travel and residence abroad will decline, and again the British experience indicates that this limitation operates to inhibit recruitment and retention.

The issues of professional morale and self-respect, of course, are vital and involve the background of prolonged hostilites in Indochina and their aftermath. First, there is the issue of atrocites: their origin and character, their extent, and their appropriate punishment. From the point of view of the military profession, the orderly process of

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military investigation and military justice constitutes the essential mechanism for coming to terms with these grave issues. But this problem is more complex; it involves an examination of the training and outlook of the United States military in Vietnam, including an understanding of the impact of that particular environment on the behavior of Americans under combat conditions. It is not an issue that can be avoided.

Second, the conduct of the war in Vietnam brings into question the role of military advice and the adequacy of military planning. In the post-Korean War period, the military expressed the "never again" concept, and strongly resisted the idea of a land force commitment on the mainland of Asia. This strategic perspective was embodied in the person of General Matthew Ridgway, even though other views were found in the military. In Indochina, basic decision making was managed in all three Presidential administrations by the small group in the office of the President. Vietnam was a President's war. Whatever may have been the initial opposition (or more accurately, reluctance to become involved), it gave way and the military displayed their traditional dedication once the decision was made by civilians. However, many military issues and failures need to be clarified. Once it became engaged in the war, the United States military accepted the notion of "victory through air power"; the limitations of that doctrine which were evident in World War II and Korea were ignored. How does one explain this extraordinary shift in military doctrine, and why was it accepted by the Joint Chiefs? These are issues for professional self-clarification.

But it is the purpose and the goals of military institutions that are the key elements in the quality of an all-volunteer force. Much has been written about the changing role of the military in contemporary society. The military profession is divided and unclear as to how much of the emerging doctrines it will accept. The notion that the military is mainly in the "killing business" dies slowly. It is difficult for any profession and especially the military to see its function alter and change.

Toward a new military role

Basically, the goal of effective deterrence requires a break in military traditions for the United States, although important steps have already been taken in this direction. The military will face real organizational problems in attempting to maintain its viability. A variety of tailor-made suggestions supplies no realistic basis for

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change. For example, while there may be specific lessons to be learned from the Israeli model, differences both in military tasks and in political settings render such an approach irrelevant to the American context. The same can be said for the Swedish format. If analogies with foreign armies are to be drawn, it is the experience of Great Britain with its volunteer force that is the closest. Likewise, monumental schemes for giving the military new functions tend to be more ideological than practical. The tasks of the American military remain, in the first instance, military.

There is a second instance, however, and the military can and should have multiple functions. The deterrent force will have vast standby resources. To reconstruct the American military it will be necessary that these resources be utilized for a wide range of national emergency functions. A force-in-being of one and one-half million, with only a ground force element stationed in Western Europe for NATO, will present considerable available manpower. The basic issue is not (as traditionalists see it) one of diverting the military from its fundamental mission. In fact, the military has traditionally been engaged in a variety of tasks, but the nature and content of such work changes. Not to make use of its standby capacity would weaken the vitality of the military, unduly isolate it from civilian society, and represent a vast wastage of valuable resources.

Clearly, the military cannot engage in activities or programs which are better performed by civilian agencies. The armed forces cannot make up for the failure of civilian education and welfare, although they can and do make their contributions in these areas as a result of their routine activities. Moreover, in a democratic society the military must be removed from domestic police activities except in rare and grave crises. But a military committed to deterrence will have considerable ability to respond to emergencies, broadly defined, and to improvise. The armed forces are already involved in the control of natural disasters. Floods, hurricanes, and the like pose emergency situations which require the military's flexible resources. To natural disasters can be added the increasing number of "man-made" emergencies: oil spills, power failures, and chemical and atomic disasters. The armed forces are already indispensable in a vast array of air and sea rescue work, to which is being added, on an experimental basis, medical evacuation. But the major frontier facing the military in the years ahead rests in environmental control and in the handling of particular aspects of pollution and resources destruction.

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The armed forces of the future will have to understand and participate in arms control arrangements. A case can be made for renaming them national emergency forces (as suggested by Albert Biderman) in order to emphasize their evolving character. I have made use of the term constabulary forces. But it makes little sense to argue about new labels. It is more important that civilian society assume an active role in directing the military to redefine its professional outlook so that it will understand that peace keeping through a military presence, deterrence, and participation in the control of national emergencies constitute the modern definition of the heroic role.

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CURRENT READING

I Am the Very Model of a Modern Intellectual

From the "Personal" column in the *New York Review of Books* (January 27, 1972):

> Woman, 40, wishes to meet man interested in sex and history of Mexico, Cuba, China, mess in medicine USA. Plus ideas of Erich Fromm, Peter Weiss, Ivan Illich, Maria Montessori, Mao, Shostakovitch, Beethoven.

A Return to Ancient Ways?

The idea of legalizing prostitution, as a "socialized" industry, has recently been a topic of discussion in Britain. The following letter (*Guardian,* 1/21/72) indicates some of the bureaucratic possibilities and problems:

> Sir,—If we are to adopt the novel Swedish idea (Guardian, January 17) of staffing houses of pleasure with civil servants my union would obviously be interested. We already organise basic grades who are utility staff for the service as a whole. A fair amount of work at this level has been defined as of a kind requiring quiet deliberation and keen concentration which cannot be done at high speed without taking chances of a kind unthinkable in a public service.
>
> If we are to have a new government department I cannot improve on your leading article's suggestion: a Ministry of Carnal Affairs. But perhaps I should remind you that there is in existence a departmental procurement agency.
>
> Promotion would not present a difficulty. Basic staff can work their way up to higher things—where people, according to the Civil Service Department, already do a wide variety of interesting jobs and with ample scope for many kinds of ability and temperament. Civil Service unions have also recently concluded a premature retirement agreement which would be happily appropriate. It provides for early retirement, with sensible pension provisions, for "structural reasons" and where there is "limited efficiency."
>
> The question of remuneration presents a huge problem. Shaw said

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Mrs. Warren did it because it was the only way she could make a good enough living to retain her self respect. There would be no similar attraction with the present salary scales my members have to suffer. The only answer is to reverse the Civil Service reforms of the nineteenth century. Return to the ancient ways, noted by a committee of inquiry in 1836, "to appoint such officers without salary . . . leaving them to pay themselves by the receipt of fees. . . ."

W. L. KENDALL,
General Secretary
The Civil & Public Services Association
London SW 17.

Spooky Capitalism

The Village Voice, our source of esoteric knowledge, had the following report in its February 17, 1972 issue:

A business has hit the big time when official trade magazines start to spring up. Occultism is no longer a quirky trend, and the Occult Trade Journal couldn't be more official. It provides inside information on what's selling in the fields of astrology, yoga, tarot, psychic and mind control phenomena, ESP, and parapsychology.

A recent issue was filled with ads, reviews, interviews, and scoops on new products, games, shops, lectures, and shows. It also featured a marketing research report on tarot, including an analysis of sales trends which showed that potential customers already own an average of 2.8 decks each. The "Monthly Business Magazine for Metaphysics" is available for $10 a year from Occult Communications Corporation, 240 Main Street, Danbury, Connecticut.

The March of Modern Science

Often some of the most interesting scientific discoveries receive no public notice. In *The Listener* for November 4, 1971 Magnus Pyke brings to light the intriguing findings which have been made in a hitherto obscure area of scientific research.

The odor associated with rain falling on dry soil has for ages engaged the attention of poets; travellers have called attention to the trumpeting of elephants detecting the first distant intimation of an approaching storm; and the recollection of the stirring of leaves, the unsteady breath of coolness after a baking hot day, is inextricably mingled in the memory with the characteristic smell of the first drops of rain falling on parched earth. But it was only a short while ago that the Division of Mineral Chemistry of the Commonwealth Scientific Institute of Research Organisations in Melbourne brought the full weight of modern science to bear on the problem. Poetry strikes in unexpected places, and none more so than in the naming of this research topic. In their official reports the Australian scientists set out to elucidate the origin and chemical compo-

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sition of the strange odoriferous compound which they designated "petrichor": essence of stone.

When the great engine of modern research—gas-liquid chromatography, infrared spectroscopy and the like—was applied to the problem, it was immediately apparent that the answer was less straightforward than had been supposed. Back in 1891, the distinguished French chemist, Berthelot, came to the conclusion that "argillaceous odour," as it was then called, was derived from the residues of dead plants surviving in the dried-up soil. A Polish investigator, among others, thought the smell was due to the presence of so-called myxobacteria surviving in the earth. This was in 1928. A later investigator, H. Nicol, writing in the *Perfumery and Essential Oil Record* of 1933, thought that the smell of rain rising from the newly wetted soil came from fungus spores and particularly from the spores of actinomycetes, a fungus from which perfumers have actually extracted odoriferous essences to mix with their scents. The Australian scientists, I. J. Bear and G. R. Thomas, however, quickly discovered that these ideas were wrong. . . .

So far, Bear and Thomas cannot yet tell the precise composition of the delicate and evocative smell that sets restless cattle fidgeting and stamping as they scent the oncoming rain. Some of its components have been named. There is a lactone and an aldehyde, an alcohol and some nitrophenols, and of the volatile acids, nonanoic acid predominates, but up till the present the essential aroma, the veritable petrichor, has not been identified. While the scientists so diligently investigating the problem have not yet discovered exactly what the chemical structure of petrichor is, they have begun to collect interesting evidence about where it comes from. In 1960 a learned paper was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (USA)* in which a study was reported of the substances which make up the blue haze which shimmers over the countryside on a summer's day. Within five years, the scientists concerned were able to publish a second report in which they not only showed that the summer haze was made up of volatile essences from leaves and grass, but they were also able to identify some of these as the fragrant compounds pinene, mycrene and isoprene which are better-known as components of juniper berries. And not content with identifying these and other compounds as ingredients of the "fresh air" constituting the summer breeze, they also made an estimate that over the whole world the vegetation must liberate into the atmosphere 438 million tons of such plant volatiles a year. . . .

Since ancient times clays have been used as absorbents. The Bible refers to the use of fuller's earth for whitening wool; kaolin, an earth related to granite, is used today as an ingredient of toothpaste, while "claying" as a means of making white sugarloaves was employed certainly in the 14th century. The point is that all these materials possess powerful absorptive properties and it is now believed that the pinene, myrcene and isoprene floating about in the atmosphere, together with a whole lot of other substances detected by Bear and Thomas—oils derived from seed-pods, waxes from leaf cuticle, terpenes from pine trees and many more—are absorbed by the parched clays lying warm under the

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sun. They have more to say as they examine their chromatographs and the infrared spectra of the different samples of baked earth after their months of exposure. But their firm conclusion is that the petrichor which is the smell of the first rain and which they have now extracted is derived from the summer atmosphere. . . .

In yet one more of their learned communications, this time in a journal called *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta,* the Australian scientists reflect on the implications of their researches—researches which at the outset may have seemed to be fanciful and useless. If their conclusions about the genesis of petrichor are correct—and they have marshalled a formidable weight of detailed evidence to support them—it seems that a wide variety of organic compounds, including hydrocarbons derived from plant matter, is constantly being distilled into the atmosphere. Certain of these organic molecules are being absorbed by the earth during dry periods, and in this absorbed material small quantities of oil are found and can be recovered from the upper layers of the soil and on rock. Although Bear and Thomas are cautious in their deductions, the implication of what they say is that the emanations of the plants which the hot sun distils into the air, part of which become absorbed on the surface of the earth and rocks, could well become through the long process of geological time the petroleum for which the advanced nations of the Earth are prepared to make the most rigorous sacrifices. How neatly this would explain the abundance of oil in the sandy desert places of the world. . . .

The elephants trumpet and the horses stamp their feet at the approach of distant rain and perhaps men too, many miles separate, look up from their desks and think of home. There is no need for them to invent extrasensory perception or the evil eye as an explanation. The explanation is there for anyone to read in Volume 30 of *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta.*

The Professorial Serpent in the Garden of Eden

A letter in the February 1972 *Atlantic* from Donna Bennett of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada:

Sir: I very much enjoyed Ross Terrill's splendid "Report from China." However, there is one matter in the article I cannot understand. The factory worker earns from Y 41 to Y 72 a month, the university professor about Y 350. How is this spread justifiable according to the regime's policy to link education with the "world outside the classroom"? Inevitably, a status system of some sort must result, based on the same economic standard as in North America. How does the university professor spend the considerable sum left over after living expenses? Would not a factory worker aspire to become a professor simply because of the higher salary, as in the West, with all the well-known disastrous results?

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